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SUBSCRIPTIONS
13 issues of Fast Car are published per annum
UK annual subscription price: £64.35
Europe annual subscription price: £78.00
USA annual subscription price: £76.00
Rest of World annual subscription price: £84.00

CONTACT US
UK subscription and back issue orderline: 01959 543 747
Overseas subscription orderline: 0044 (0) 1959 543 747
Toll free USA subscription orderline: 1-888-777-0275
UK customer service team: 01959 543 747
Customer service email address: subs@kelsey.co.uk
Customer service and subscription postal address:
Fast Car Customer Service Team
Kelsey Publishing Ltd
Cudham Tithe Barn,
Berry's Hill, Cudham,
Kent, TN16 3AG
United Kingdom

KELSEY SHOP
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WEBSITE
Find current subscription offers and buy back issues at
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DISTRIBUTION
Seymour Distribution Ltd, 2 East Poultry Avenue | London, EC1A 9PT
www.seymour.co.uk
Tel: 020 7429 4000

PRINTING
William Gibbons & Sons Ltd

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ED SPEAK

Has car culture ever been so diverse? Judging by the feature car line-up in this issue, we would suggest not. Sure the core of the scene is still dominated by the air-ride and split rim gang, and there's nothing wrong with that, damn I even fall into that category. But look to the fringes and you'll find wonders like lowrider Civics and fast road Fiat Abarths to VIP'd Mercs and Liberty Walk Huracáns. And yes, all of the aforementioned are featured in this magazine, as well as one of the best Mk1 Golfs in the world. I reckon it's the best line-up of cars we've ever featured. Show and go, bargain to billionaire – we've got it all covered here.

And I haven't even mentioned this month's crazy cover car, Jordan Saunders' home-brewed RX-7. Jordan's ride might not be the fastest, cleanest or best looking in the issue but it's a mixture of all three and has serious road presence – not to mention those copper-plated rims. We decided to do the shoot on the streets of London, and the attention this thing created was insane. Jordan was even pulled over by the police; it turns out they didn't want anything more than a closer look at his awesome ride. So two thumbs fresh to those coppers, not just for the respect they had for Jordan's RX but because they seemed to ignore the fact that I had a photographer hanging out the passenger door of my car on the free-flowing A2.

Big Love,

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE FRIDAY 9 NOVEMBER



SLIM JULES
EDITOR

"My favourite car in this whole issue? That's a really tough one! Erm, I'll take all of them!"



MIDGE
CONTRIBUTING
EDITOR

"The Huracán. No, not because it's worth more than my flat but because it's a pretty colour."



INITIAL G
ART EDITOR

"I love lowriders and I love Civics, so it was only ever going to be the Fiat 500 for me."



GLENDA
WEBSITE EDITOR

"I'd take the VIP'd Merc C240, hire a chauffeur, and then check my beard in the mirrors."

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Japanese icons

MEGUIAR'S BBQ CLUB

We hit the prestigious Meguiar's BBQ Club and luckily the only bangers on view were chargrilled!

Words & Photos: Slim Jules

As the golden leaves fall to the floor and we reach for our winter coats, summer is but a distant memory, but by god, did we have a relentless heatwave-infused few months. I'm not one of these people who complains about the cold in winter and the heat when the sun comes out, but I was close on a few occasions this summer, as the temperature didn't seem to drop below 30-degrees for weeks on end. This kind of heat is lovely when you're sitting next to a pool with a piña colada in hand and an inviting air-conditioned room at your disposal, but it's not so great in offices and houses that have more insulation than an Eskimo's underclangers! So when Meguiar's booked their annual BBQ for one Sunday in July, the sunshine in England's hottest summer since 1976 was just a formality, right? Erm, no...

As it turns out, Meguiar's seemed to have booked the only wet weekend in three months of non-stop UV rays. Did this stop the cars turning up, the BBQ being lit and people having a good time? Did it hell. In fact, it was almost a refreshing change from the Sahara-esque climate we'd been experiencing and the perfect opportunity to show off the beading qualities of Meguiar's products.

History

The Meguiar's BBQ Club's first event was way back in 2012. And apart from one year when it became the Breakfast Club, it has been a regular on the Meguiar's calendar ever since. Held at their Daventry based head quarters, it's an opportunity for Meguiar's to give something back to their loyal customer base.

Tom Clarke Senior Marketer said: "We go to around 50 shows a year and get to see some of the best cars in the UK: Ford, Jap,

VW, modified and standard. At the shows, we realised that the top cars owners were so engrossed in 'their car world' that they rarely got time to see other cars. So simply, we try to bring these cars and owners together. It's not about being the cleanest car or the fastest but bringing like-minded people together, sticking a BBQ on and hanging out. No sales, no demo of product, just a BBQ with a family vibe, and a bunch of top cars chilling in the yard."

See a full feature on
Riiva's VW Arteon
next month





Luckily it didn't rain inside



Winner

Winner



Chicken dinner



Winners

Being an invite-only event means that the quality of cars on show are of the highest standard, making a rod for the their own back when it comes to judging the metal. The Meguiar's team always ensure a good mix too, from supercars to hot rods and everything in between. These were judged to be the best ...

“DO YOU KNOW WHAT I LOVE? FOLLOWING A CAR WITH AN EMISSIONS PROBLEM. YOU KNOW THE TYPE, THE ONES WHERE THEIR FUMES FILL YOUR COCKPIT FULL OF CO2 AND HAVE YOU GASPING FOR BREATH LIKE A FAT CHILD ON SPORTS DAY.”

The worst bit? Nothing seems to help: putting the blowers on only seems to enhance the problem, while risking your life by sticking your head out of the window seems the only feasible option for grabbing some 'fresh' air.

At every junction you hope that the car will turn off, but sod's law ensures that they'll be travelling in the same direction as you for the foreseeable future! The worst part of this problem is that the offenders probably don't even realise they're ruining your commute, as they leave their pollution behind them.

People hate on EVs but at least they'd eradicate this problem. Sort your cars out you dirty, Earth-killing bastards!

The Angry Man

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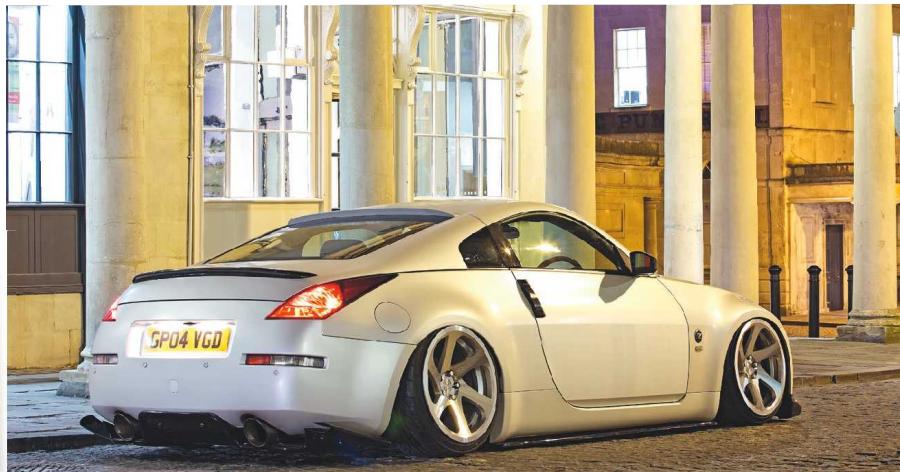
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details to bring your wrap to life. Then simply enter via the Fast Car website (link below) before the 8 November.

To allow 3M to make the most of your vehicle, your paintwork must be rust free and in good condition. Any imperfection or damage to the paint or lacquer on the bodywork will show through the wrap and means that the vehicle wrapper might not be able to wrap that part of the vehicle.

Good luck...



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B18



Tea and Sympathy



Jordan Saunders has had a few ups and downs with this mercurial FD. But with the aid of a few good cups of tea, everything's turned out alright in the end...



HOT RIDES: MAZDA RX-7

*Air-ride, on a Rex?
You betcha!*



An army, as the old saying goes, marches on its stomach. Napoleon Bonaparte coined that phrase, and he knew a thing or two about sipping burgundy while watching his troops on the march. And while it's all very well trying to be macho and following the 'blood, sweat and beers' ethos of certain tuners who'll tell you that creativity flows forth from smashing back a few cans, those are the people who'll turn up to a show one day with mysteriously singed hair or their fingertips missing. No, the true heroes of the scene are fuelled by good ol' cups of tea, stirring it with an oily spanner and refusing to wash the mug so that the inside of it looks like it's crafted from rich mahogany. Furthermore, the heroes behind the heroes, as it were, are the ones who are constantly flicking the switch on the kettle and making sure there's a ready supply of PG Tips in the caddy. People like Jordan Saunders' nan, for example, who essentially fuelled the entirety of this RX-7's build by keeping its owner and craftsman readily charged with an ever-present cuppa and the odd sandwich to boot. "My nan put up with a lot, having a pair of dismantled Mazdas on her driveway for months on end," Jordan laughs. "But thankfully she makes a great cup of tea."

This isn't the first time Jordan's pulled the innards out of a Japanese car with the aim of making it faster and better, although it's fair to say things have never gone quite this far before. Way back across the blinking time circuits, he started out with an EG Honda Civic, tearing it down and rebuilding it from first principles, swapping out the 1.5 for a B18, and it was in the course of planning a turbo conversion for it that he was struck by a lightning bolt. Not a literal one, of course, that'd be terrible; no, we're obviously speaking figuratively. Said lightning bolt was the rapidly dawning realisation that, at the tender age of 21, he'd be able to insure an RX-7. "Well, that was decision made," he recalls. "As soon as I figured that out, the Civic was up for sale and I was searching for a Rex!"



**"While I was swapping the motor,
I fitted a big single-turbo..."**

After a little bit of hunting about, Jordan acquired himself a twin-turbo FD – the very one you see here, although it was rather different back then. Largely stock, it had simply been tickled with a set of coilovers and some fresh rims. Spec is largely irrelevant when you're a 21-year-old in an FD of course, as the very fact that you've got such a thing at all is so obscene that it's cause for constant jubilation. Until the bloody thing breaks, that is. Which it may well do. Jordan's certainly did.

"It wasn't long before the dreaded RX-7 issues arose," he grimaces. "The sequential twin turbos were trouble – either they wouldn't kick in when they should, or they were just very intermittent, thanks to the rats' nest of vacuum lines and solenoids. I simplified all of that and thought I'd made it better, but it still wasn't great. More drivable, yes, but definitely not right."

In addition to this catalogue of woes, Jordan had been having one or two issues with body image. The decision to fit a Feed-style widebody kit had necessitated cutting out the rear arches, although when he came to fit the air-ride, this turned out to be a bad move. First of all, though... air-ride on an FD?! Yep, this is full-on purist-baiting stuff, Jordan's stellar mix of AirREX struts and Air Lift management leading to something that makes the finished product look totally badass while also really irritating the members of the various RX-7 owners' clubs. But we digress – the FD was far from finished at this point...

"As soon as the air was installed, I could see I wouldn't be able to



Copper-plated SSR rims





achieve the fitment I wanted with the kit as it had raised the arch line up,” he laments. “To compound matters, I then had a bit of an incident with the temperamental turbos coming on boost unexpectedly and I, er, bent the car a little bit.”

A lot of us would probably have considered huffily throwing in the towel at this point. Sure, it’s awesome to be able to acquire a bona fide JDM tuner car at such a fresh-faced age, but the damn thing was clearly bloody cursed. Best to throw it in the bin and start again, eh?

But no, Jordan is made of sterner stuff. “I bought myself a rolling shell, and set about swapping everything across,” he says. “The engine and gearbox, loom, suspension, all of the interior and the dash... basically the whole car, it was a massive task, but it turned out to be a bit of a blessing in disguise. Luckily my nan was happy to let me turn her driveway into a scrapyard for a few months, keeping those cups of tea flowing the whole time.”

At this point, it’s worth addressing the elephant in the room: while reselling the car sorts out those banged up bodywork issues, surely it’s a bit dumb to swap across an engine you know isn’t working properly? Fear not though, as Jordan is not dumb. Jordan is canny. And there was a plan afoot.

“While the car was in bits anyway, I opted to junk the twin turbo setup altogether to eliminate all of those issues, and while I was swapping the motor over I fitted a single-turbo kit, so that when I put my foot down it would just go,” he reasons. And go it certainly does – the turbo in question is a GReddy TD04, working in tandem with a custom exhaust system and HKS intercooler; the fuelling has also been massively improved and, while the car’s yet to be dyno’d, it’s safe to assume that it’s making somewhere in the region of 400bhp. Jordan’s happy to report that it does so with reassuring reliability too!

Anyway, back at the build, it was time to finally nail those aesthetics: “I found a set of SSR SP1s for sale,” he says, “and I figured out the spacing for the perfect fitment. Then the shell was off to BJ Miles Bodyshop for a full respray – the plan was to do all the prep myself and have Marc paint it, although I started to find a few iffy repairs from the car’s past and I was losing motivation with the sanding and all the filler, so I handed it over to him to sort it all out! The finish is perfect, and with the car back in new paint I set about bolting on all the carbon bits I’d been collecting, along with the ‘99-spec front bumper.”

The mojo was well and truly kicking by this point, with JDMDistro



Looks killer dropped on AirREX kit

delivering a set of Bride Zeta 3s; Jordan complementing their lurid red with the iconic green Takata harnesses. The interior was fully retrimmed in faux suede (“I wanted the Alcantara look without the price!”), various trim parts carbon-dipped to match the exterior carbon fibre, and a new set of wing mirrors were sourced as he really didn’t like the stock ones. He didn’t like any of the aftermarket ones either, so after a bit of lateral-thinking the car now sports a pair of Spoon items from a Civic, the original mirror mounting points now welded up and doing much to smooth out the car’s lines.

With more and more unique touches finding their way into the mix, Jordan was again struck by inspiration (don’t worry, still not a real lightning bolt, he’s fine) and decided to go all-in with the wheels: “I acid-stripped the centres of the SSRs and hand-polished them to be copper-plated, along with the harness bar inside,” he says. “This was at once one of the best and worst decisions I made, as copper tends to tarnish after a few days; it goes dull, and starts to turn purple and green when it gets wet, so I’m constantly polishing them. They do look amazing though!” We can’t help but agree, and it’s definitely worth the elbow grease. It may be a pain in the arse to keep looking proper, but that’s exactly why cars don’t have copper wheels. Jordan’s ticking a large box on the uniqueness front here.

As is the nature of projects like this, he’s constantly fiddling with it – just a week before our shoot, a new boot build was crafted to tidy



*Splash of colour
from Bride*

**“I acid-striped
the centres of the
SSRs and hand-
polished them”**

HOT RIDES: MAZDA RX-7

things up with some killer hardlines, and we imagine some copper will probably be finding its way in there at some point too. After all of these years of problem-solving and hard graft, it's great to finally be able to enjoy the RX-7 for what it was built for – hard driving, with oodles of boost and the scenery blurring at improbable speed – and it's entertaining to leave the haters in his wake as Jordan tears for the horizon. Yes, there are people who are revolted by the idea of air-ride on an FD. Yes, his family have been laughing at his massive spoiler. But does he care? Hell no, Jordan's having too much fun tearing about in one of the UK's coolest RX-7s. Load him up with a cup of tea and he's good to go. 

TECH SPEC: MAZDA RX-7

STYLING:

'99-spec front bumper and carbon fibre lip, custom carbon front splitter, carbon side skirts, fibreglass rear diffuser, carbon rear wing, Honda Civic Spoon mirrors – carbon-skinned and mounted to door mouldings, fibreglass bonnet

TUNING:

13B-REW two-rotor Wankel, converted to single turbo with GReddy TD04, custom exhaust system, HKS intercooler, DM Motorsport fuel rail, 1,680cc Bosch secondary injectors, Aeromotive fuel pressure regulator, Koyo radiator, air-con delete, battery relocated. Power 400bhp (approx)

CHASSIS:

18-inch SSR Professor SP1 wheels – copper-plated, 215/35 Toyo Proxes tyres (front), 235/35 Falken Ziex tyres (rear), AirREX struts, Air Lift management, custom boot build with hardlines

INTERIOR:

Dash and doorcards retrimmed in faux black suede, Bride Zeta 3 seats, Takata harnesses, custom harness bar by Fast Road Conversions, Nardi deep-dish steering wheel, NRG slim boss and quick-release, carbon-dipped trim, Sony doubleDIN, boost gauge

THANKS:

I would love to say thanks to my nan for putting up with me on her drive and for her tea-making, Marc at BJ Miles Bodyshop for all my paint and bodywork, Dan, Harry, Darren, Jake, my dad, and all my other friends that helped out



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RETRO RIDES

GATHERING 2018

In science you'd get to burn and dissect stuff, in design technology you'd get to make desk-tidies out of MDF and acrylic, and in PE you'd get to play football. But one lesson that always sucked, was history. The classroom had a musky smell and the teacher a bad case of body odour – it was about as much fun as a double-detention on a Friday.

The eruption of Mount Vesuvius and story of Pompeii is a very tragic one, but to be honest, I was more interested in blinding the teacher by reflecting the sun off my Casio calculator watch than learn about the Romans (although they did build straight roads, race chariots and have gladiators).

But not all history is dull...

Shelsley Walsh, for example, is the oldest motorsport venue in the world, and has attracted drivers to the venue for over 113-years, damn, that's even longer than Initial G has been alive. Why is this relevant? Because it's also the venue to one of the coolest events on the show calendar, the Retro Rides Gathering. Which, indecently, is also about cool old shit.

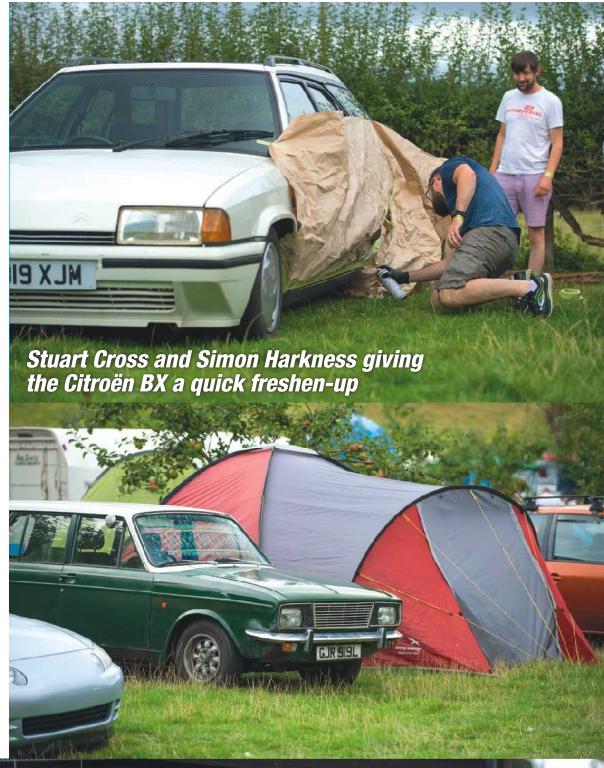
Someone needs to ring the Department for Education and get them to include retro cars in the curriculum, we reckon truancy would drop and grades would rise. I mean, who wouldn't want to learn about cool cars? Here's what went down at RRG 2018...



OUT THERE: RETRO RIDES



It may be in a field, but some renowned scene cars sporting Stanceworks and Rollhard logos were sitting pretty (most likely after dragging a fair bit of field along with them)



Stuart Cross and Simon Harkness giving the Citroën BX a quick freshen-up

Campsite

The campsite is, for many, as big a part of the weekend as the show! On site modifications, weird creations spluttering around and late night sneak peaks of the show cars are all part of the fun!



Tat Auction

The customary tat auction never fails to entertain and supply bargains. All sorts was auctioned off by 'Kev from Wales' and his ever failing croaky voice including bargain Merc wheels, random wings and panels and even an 'emergency 10mm socket kit' which consisted of a socket and a cable tie which fetched a comically high bid. It's all going to charity, so the more bids the merrier!



Big block V8 noises were painfully loud and deeply impressive



Hillclimb

Variety is the name of the game here. On the hillclimb we had everything from a Commer camper van to a big block hot rod to typical track day machinery. There's no timing gear switched on, so nobody is fretting over that extra tenth of a second. All the better for a bit of relaxed fun. Especially when it descends into a comical procession of one-upmanship in the tyre warming area. Yes, basically a burnout competition! This year ended up with one gold MK2 Granada of, erm, perhaps the person writing this getting a bit carried away and blowing a tyre!



Pic by Tom Whitmore





Race Award
Jason Johns' Opel Ascona



Club Stands

The <DIVERSION> stand never fails to entertain with a typically diverse selection of metal coming down from Scotland and the North East. A ratty JDM Cressida, 4.2 converted SD1, SR20 Lada, big power Volvo 940 and a tyre-popping Granada Ghia, to name but a few!



Hong Kong Fooey Award
Tahir Zafar Shah's Datsun 180B



Cool Award
Pawel Formaniak's Fiat 126



Car Of The Year Award
Meguiar's Datsun Sunny



The Low Set Award

Simplicity is effective. And this gorgeous E28 535i of Ben Hodgson proves that point. Bought as a stock car two years ago, it was then treated to a full respray to freshen up the 30+ year old bodywork and then it was given 'the treatment'. Wheels and lows! As a trip to Wörthersee was on the to do list air ride was adapted to fit the BMW to great effect giving a spot on stance and Euro-practicality. The Gotti type 55c splits are classics.



OUT THERE: RETRO RIDES



Different Award

A fitting winner for the 'Different' award is Richard's Prelude. Not a car we have ever seen modified to this extent (possibly not at all!). It may have started out as a rot box when Richard bought it in 2012, especially as it had been sitting for a decade prior, but it's now a fully sorted animal with some cutting edge mods. The old 80bhp lump and slushbox are long gone, and in their place are a manual conversion and 240bhp Honda H22 VTEC drivetrain. This, coupled with a host of custom chassis upgrades and a twist on a BMW metallic, makes the old girl equally at home on track or in a show & shine!



Different Award

Richard Voaden's Honda Prelude



Truck Award

Jake Smith's Ford F100



Link ECU Turbo Award

Don't you just love it when a plan comes together? Alex Lovell's stunning PS13 Silvia looks like it could have come straight out of the factory as it is, but in reality it started life as a totally stock, naturally aspirated, automatic Jap import with crazy-low miles. This didn't last long as a rusty wreck of an R32 Skyline donated its engine in the aim of getting the Silvia to where it is today – putting out a healthy 470bhp. This is no half-arsed build though, GT-R brakes, diff and shafts keep things together, plus Alex is a big fan of the OEM style and JDM optional extras, so it is full road spec and even has luxuries like aircon still in play.



Link ECU N/A Award

Tanya Bloomfield's Mazda MX-5



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Words Dan Bevis
Photography Mariusz Conek

If you thought France had no chips in the watercooled VeeDub game, allow this fresh Mk1 to change your mind. This all-carbon road-racer Golf has set a new benchmark for VW builds...





Tucked, smoothed and packing VR6 power

Drink it in with an open perspective. What you're looking at here, in essence, is the world. Sure, it may look like a Mk1 VW Golf, but it's so, so much more than that. This is a project that neatly encapsulates the very nature of the Earth itself and reimagines it as an Ocean Blue vision of the macrocosm. You see, this Golf is characterised by two of the world's most intriguing and exciting elements: carbon and gold. The former is the fourth most abundant element in the universe and, in this watercooled interpretation, you'll find it everywhere.

Gold, however, is rare and exquisite; the total amount of gold in existence makes up only 0.000000003% of the Earth's mass (and it took us a long time and a hell of a lot of complicated maths to work that out – we used to read car mags under the desk in maths lessons). So the gold on this car is sprinkled around to embellish rather than overwhelm, and the finish is magnificent – a shiny wedge of imposing carbon, twinkling with rarefied detail. Its heart is so black-and-yellow it'd make Wiz Khalifa blush.

Where has this world-beating and world-mirroring Golf come



Bring on the trumpets

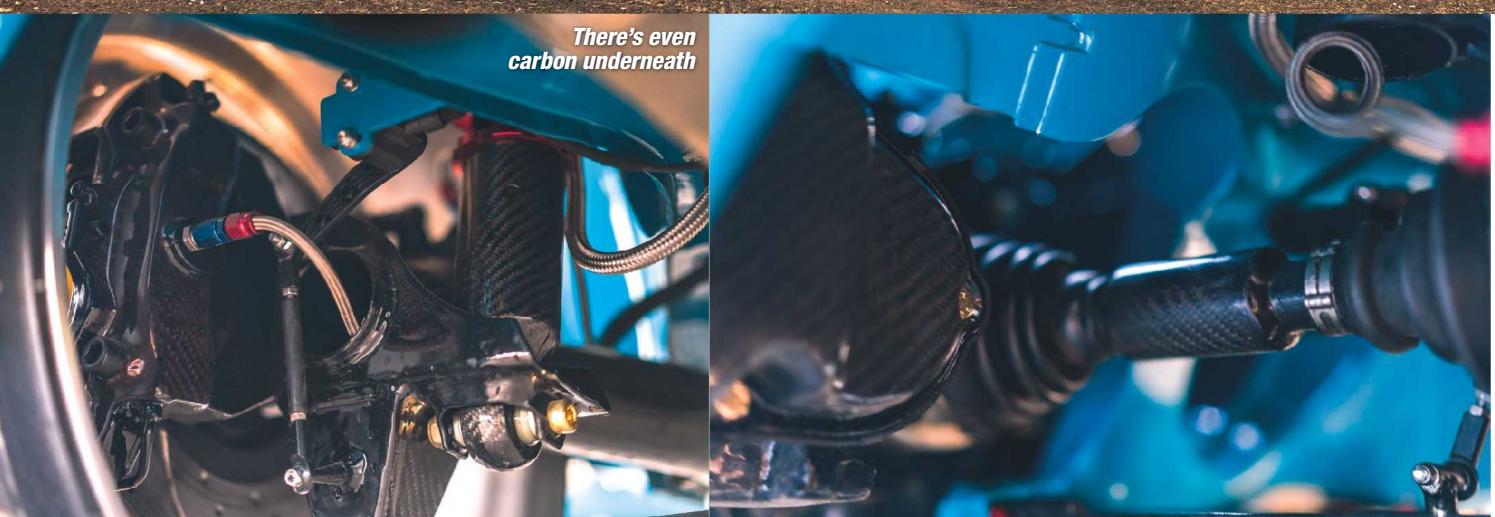
from? Limoges, in France – an Occitan city known for its porcelain, Gothic architecture and, now, for GC Custom: a full-service hot-rodding outfit run by 23 year-old Gabriel Couty. Don't let his tender years fool you, this guy lives and breathes modified cars and has a magical flair for it. And if you think that French tuning consists principally of questionable expanding-foam bodykits and minimal power mods then allow this impeccable Mk1 to reframe your outmoded misconceptions.

"The car was rescued from scrap," Gabriel tells us. "My brother has a Mk1 Golf GTI and I always wanted one too, but this one needed a bit of work when I got it." Yep, it's fair to say that's a bit of an understatement... "All of the panels have been replaced with new VW parts, and I'd say about 80-percent of the car is custom... and 80-percent is carbon," he grins.

Well, that's quite a lot of information he's hinted at there, so let's unpick it piece by piece. First of all, before he could set about building anything remotely show-worthy, Gabriel had to restore the decrepit shell. Having been straightened to factory specs, it was treated to new doors, a new bonnet, new roof, new front and rear wings, a new front panel, and a new swallowtail rear panel, something which Golf nerds love – see how the lines kink downward in the centre of the rear panel; early Golfs only had swallowtails for a year or so, post-1976 ones just had a straight line. It's all in the detail.

Indeed, 'all in the detail' pretty much sums up what happened next. It's safe to say that Gabriel got a bit carried away. You see, he wanted some carbon fibre, and some became loads, until it was really almost everything. So, here's a diverting experiment for those of you who are keen to earn your Blue Peter badge (or, in Gabriel's case, we guess it'd be 'Pierre Bleu'): Take a bunch of carbon atoms, and bond them together into crystals that are more or less arranged in a line. Repeat this a few thousand times, then bundle all the strands together into a sort of tiny untwisted rope. OK, now lay a load of these little ropes into a thermoset resin – epoxy, say, or polyester – cook it in the oven for a while, and voila: you've just made some carbon-fibre. Well, carbon-fibre-reinforced polymer, to

**"The car was rescued
from scrap..."**



HOT RIDES: MK1 GOLF



be precise, although if you're getting matey with your new creation then simply 'carbon' will do the trick as a nickname. Now you've got something with a very high tensile strength, low weight, high stiffness, high temperature tolerance, low thermal expansion, and high chemical resistance – all the properties you may desire for making housings for oily machinery without adding too much mass.

The benefits hardly need spelling out, making things simultaneously stronger and lighter is a no-brainer. Your car will go faster and be safer. Of course, it's also quite pricey – making CFRP is a fiddly process, after all – which is part of the reason why you often see people running unpainted carbon-fibre bonnets and what-have-you. It's a badge of honour. Even more than a Blue Peter badge is.

This figurative badge – whichever one, take your pick – is proudly displayed everywhere possible on Gabriel's Golf. On the exterior, you'll find it making up the mirrors, USDM bumpers, door handles, grille surrounds, fuel filler, window pillars, it's everywhere. But when you open the door and peep inside, you'll find your definition of 'everywhere' being reworked, as there's just so much carbon inside it's unreal. The custom dash gleams with the stuff, with its integrated Air Lift controller and MOD7E digi-dash; the rollcage is carbon, the doorcards, the door handles, the door catches themselves, the caps on the Viair compressors, it's an all-out visual assault.

Carbon may be the fourth most abundant element in the universe, but Gabriel's caricaturised the globe here – it's the most abundant element in his Golf by quite some margin. It's almost enough to distract you from the neat air install itself; "This is the world's first Mk1 Golf to be running Air Lift 3H," Gabriel casually drops into the conversation, as if we weren't already overloaded with the sheer weight of all the awesome.

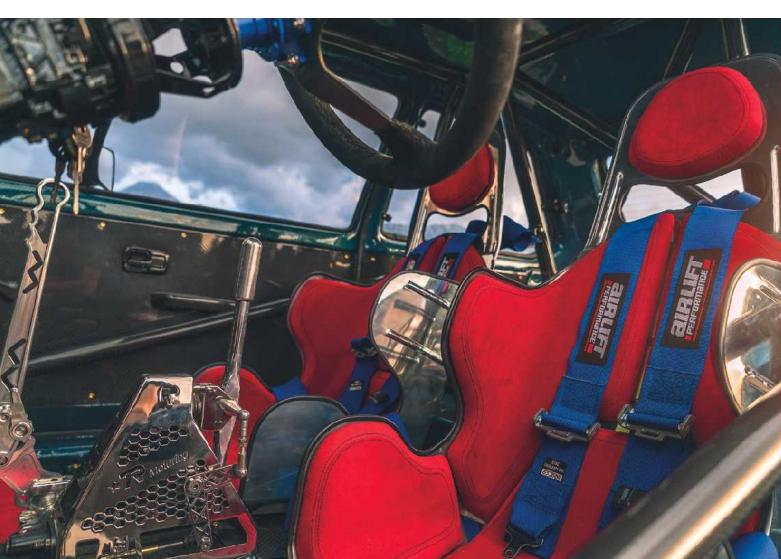
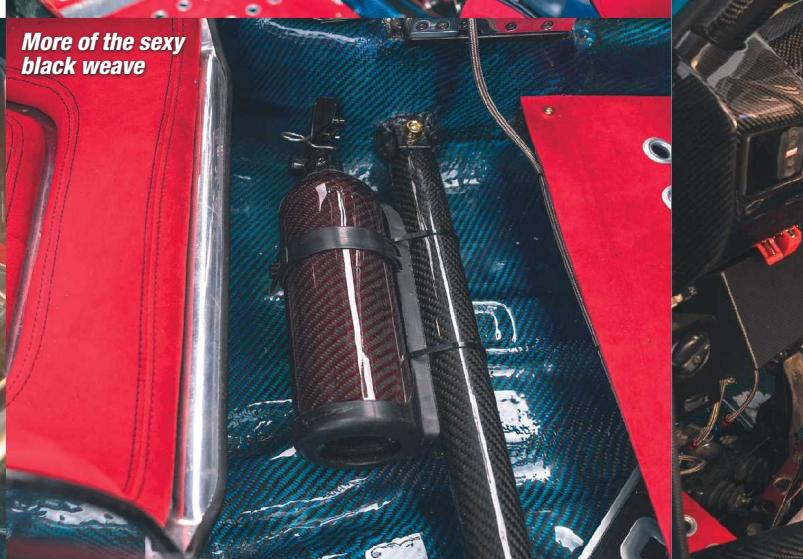
Moving to the artfully shaved and smoothed engine bay, you'll find – you guessed it – yet more carbon fibre. Oodles of it. The cam cover, the strut brace (cleverly integrating the header tank, thus saving a reservoir and tidying things up), the triangulation bars, the

engine mounts, they're all crafted from the magical weave. So are all the pulleys and ancillaries. It's so much to absorb, it takes your brain a second to register that the motor's sporting six trumpets at the front and six branches to its manifold at the back. Yep, this canny modder's swapped in a VR6. "The head's ported with Supertech valves," says Gabriel. "It's got a custom R32-based oil system, ITBs from DG Motorsport, custom exhaust, custom mounts, custom radiator, custom everything." As a showcase for his business, all of this bespoke craftsmanship works very well indeed, and the VR6's energetic grunt channels through a strengthened Mk3 Golf gearbox into a really capable chassis.

Everything that can be renewed has been replaced with OEM VW parts which have all been reworked in carbon fibre (but of course), with the back end set up to Berg Cup race car specs. "I wanted a racing car with an original look," he explains, and you can totally see the logic of that. This car has to effectively wear three hats; firstly it's a shop window to GC Customs, and secondly it needs to



More of the sexy black weave



“I’d say about 80-percent of the car is custom and 80-percent is carbon!”



Kirkey seats have Lambo Alcantara padding – nice



Attention to detail is stunning

HOT RIDES: MK1 GOLF



be flawlessly finished so that it excites at shows. But it's that third hat which fits Gabriel best, the one that fulfils his cheeky enthusiasm for driving about like his hair's on fire.

While we were in the engine bay, you might well have noticed the accents of gold. Every bolt, every fixing, every washer has been plated in 24-carat gold, an aesthetic cue neatly tied in to the aggressively-lipped RAD 48 wheels. The gold is the foil to the carbon, the cherry on the cake, and it speaks volumes about the quality of the build. And yet all the while the Golf's keen to remind you that it's a proper racer at heart. The brakes came from Porsche – GT3 calipers at the front, GT2s at the rear, in carbon obviously – and the supercar theme continues with the way those super-lightweight Kirkey seats have been trimmed in genuine Lamborghini Alcantara. Posh.

This Golf really is everything; race car, show car, custom car, its magnificence has its own gravity. It's the whole world, distilled into a tiny supermini-sized package.

TECH SPEC: MK1 GOLF

STYLING:

Ocean Blue (L57H), fully restored shell with new doors, new bonnet, new roof, new front and rear wings, new front panel, new swallowtail rear panel, all fixing bolts and washers in 24-carat gold, carbon fuel filler relocated to rear panel, carbon USDM bumpers, USDM side markers, carbon arch covers, carbon mirrors, carbon door handles, pop-out rear windows

TUNING:

2.8-litre VR6 with full carbon fibre detailing, ported head with Supertech valves, all new ARP bolts, stock cams, R32 oil pump with custom oil system, USDM oil cap, DG Motorsport ITBs, DLP Performance mapping, custom stainless steel exhaust system with 6-2-1 manifold and hidden tip, custom engine mounts, custom stainless radiator, carbon strut brace with integrated header tank, 2x Bosch 044 fuel pumps, alloy fuel cell with ATL gauge, reinforced Mk3 Golf VR6 gearbox, Sachs race clutch, 4.3kg flywheel

CHASSIS:

6.75x17in RAD 48 VR Zero-Lip wheels (5x100) in brushed ceramic gold gloss with hidden valves, 185/35 Nankang NS-1s, Air Lift Performance air-ride with 3H management and custom sensor fittings, Porsche GT3 carbon front calipers and Porsche GT2 carbon rear calipers with EBC Turbo-Groove discs and YellowStuff pads, anodised OBP pedal box, LB Performance hydraulic handbrake with R32 calipers

INTERIOR:

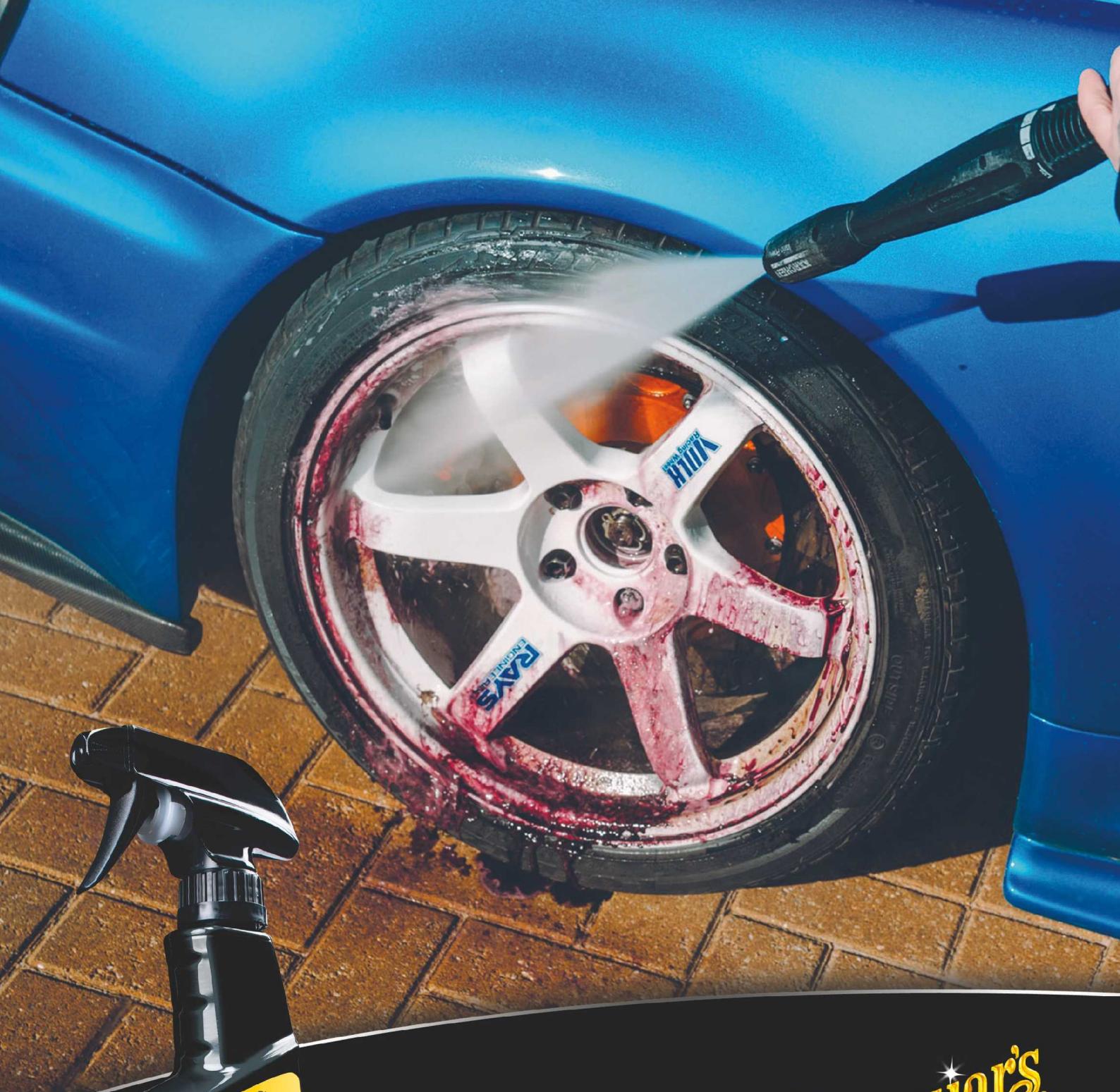
Kirkey race seats – trimmed in Lamborghini red Alcantara, custom Sparco 4-point harnesses, full rollcage in carbon, custom stainless TR Motoring gear shifter, custom carbon dash with Air Lift 3H controller and MOD7E digi-dash integrated, polished air tank with hardlines, Vair compressors with carbon caps, Sparco steering wheel, carbon doorcards and door catches, carbon window winders, carbon fire extinguisher, carbon everything

THANKS:

DLP Performance for ECU tuning, Alex for the interior, Cylou's special parts machine, Romain Mouquet for air-ride parts, Flo, and Loulou

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TOP 10 FIRST CARS

We have a saying here at Fast Car: 'Do as we say, but not necessarily always what we do... unless it's something awesome, which it probably is, but tread carefully just in case'. It's not the catchiest saying, granted, but it is quite appropriate for this particular scenario. You see, we're about to dole out some advice on first cars – but our own collective history of first cars generally involved spending a couple of hundred quid on a shit old Nova, which then blew up after a month and left oil all over the M25. So, er, don't do that. Learn from our stupid mistakes, and take our sage counsel now that we're older and wiser.

You see, whether you're sixteen and champing at the bit to get your driving licence after your next birthday, or you're in your 20s or 30s (or more) and have only just passed your test, you'll be looking at your first car with some keenness. You want something cool, that's obvious – no-one needs that embarrassing yellow Fiat from

The Inbetweeners. You also want something reasonably reliable, so you're not calling your mum to come and tow you home on a weekly basis. It'll need to be cheap to run – frugal on the fuel, easily obtainable service parts and inexpensive tax. And most importantly, you want something you can afford to insure. In a lot of cases, a first car's insurance can cost more than the car itself, so you really need to factor that in. So what we've done here is to take a rough budget of around £3,000 (a figure we arrived at by calculating the amount of cash you might have saved up from a couple of summers of shop work and a couple of winters of babysitting, minus what you've spent on trainers and fizzy pop) and pinpointed the top ten cars you can buy for that which will be cool, fun, and have modifying potential once you've built up a bit of no-claims bonus. Choose wisely – we've featured quite a few cars over the years which were people's first rides that they'd modded and built up over a few years – who knows where this first car adventure will take you...?

Ford Fiesta 1.25 (Mk7)

The Fiesta is a bit of a no-brainer when it comes to first cars, and that's been true for generations. They've been such a massive seller for so many decades that there will always be a cheap Fiesta knocking about for a first-timer, and the good news is that at our £3k budget point you can get a really good one. You'll be looking at a 1.25 from around 2009; the 81bhp motor is pretty perky and the car's surprisingly well-equipped – you'll more than likely find one with air-con, 16in alloys, leather steering wheel, decent factory audio, all the bells and whistles that we never had back in the olden days! The Fiesta's really well served by the aftermarket too, so when it comes to modifying time you'll have oodles of options – the 4x108 PCD is very common so there are lots of wheel options, a set of GAZ coilovers is about £500, and Direnza sell a 4-1 decat manifold (for off-road/track use, obvs) for just £200, which will free up a few horses and make the right noises.

Insurance group: 7

Insurance cost: £1,215

Top three mods: Coilovers, wheels, exhaust manifold





TOP 10: FIRST CARS

MINI One (R56)

The MINI proved to be such a massive seller that the used market is flooded with them, so you can pick up quite a lot of car for your money. Obviously as a first car you're not going to be going for the sporty top-of-the-range Cooper S – and even the Cooper may prove wallet-stretching at insurance time – but the One is a perfectly decent little car, and most of the bits are interchangeable if you feel like making it faster in the future!

Three-grand buys you a Mk2 (R56) MINI One, which has a 95bhp 1.4-litre motor and a frankly unbelievable combined mpg figure of 61.4! (Although you'll never see that – but you still won't be bothering the petrol pumps too often.) The interiors are brilliantly quirky on these cars, and with the wheels right at the car's corners they're chuckable little runabouts too. Fit a Quaife LSD and some thicker anti-roll bars from the JCW model and have some fun on the country lanes!

Insurance group: 8

Insurance cost: £1,465

Top three mods: LSD, thicker ARBs, Cooper S engine swap

**Toyota iQ**

We've tried to keep this list to cars that look like proper cars, if you see what we mean, and steer away from things like the Citroën C1 and Hyundai i10 which (and no disrespect to owners of such things) tend to look a bit cheap and Fisher-Price. So why include the little iQ? Because this tiny car has a secret that actually makes it extremely cool...

Let's look at the facts, first of all. The 1.0-litre model is very cheap to insure, being way down in group 3, and the road tax is free; you also get climate control, a decent stereo, auto lights, auto wipers, all the toys. So what's the secret? Well, have you heard of the Aston Martin Cygnet? That was a rebadged Toyota iQ sold in the UK from 2011-13 – it cost three times as much as the Toyota and, while the running gear was the same, it had a proper Aston interior. So if you can find a Cygnet in a scrapyard and pillage it for its innards, you'll have the swankiest supermini in the college car park. (Aston Martin also recently fitted a Cygnet with the V8 from a Vantage S – but that might, er, cost a bit more...)

Insurance group: 3

Insurance cost: £1,215

Top three mods: Coilovers, wrap, Aston Martin interior

Citroën C4 1.4

The first-generation Citroën C4 was available in two shapes – a five-door which looked frumpy and grandma-ish, and a three-door which looked cool and edgy and slightly weird. Naturally it's the second one you're after, with its reverse-raked glass tailgate and styling that makes it look like a Nike trainer. The 2.0-litre VTS will unfortunately be out of your insurable reach as a first car, but the lesser 1.4 is still a perfectly decent steer. The interior's pretty cool, as the steering wheel centres stays perfectly still as you turn the rim (creepy!) and there's a great big digital speedo in the middle of the dash, while the equipment list is fairly long – you basically get electric everything.

K&N sell an uprated panel filter for the 1.4 engine, or you could go with a universal induction kit; couple it with a custom exhaust from Powerflow and some lowering springs from Cobra or Apex and you're all set!

Insurance group: 10

Insurance cost: £1,465

Top three mods: Exhaust, air filter, lowering springs





Fiat 500 TwinAir

When the Fiat 500 was launched in 2007, there was a lot of talk of it being retro and paying homage to the 1957 original. This was obvious in its old-school styling cues, but Fiat didn't really walk the walk until 2011 when they stuck a two-cylinder engine in it.

OK, two cylinders and a displacement of 0.9-litres may sound like a recipe for misery, but think about it: they're relatively big cylinders (look at it as a 1.8-litre engine that's been chopped in half), and it makes a brilliant buzzing noise which makes it hilariously fun to drive. Trust us, this is the most fun you can have at very low speed!

Helpfully, Fiat have flogged oodles of 500s for many years in all sorts of spec variants, so when it's modifying time you can pick and choose from all the best Abarth bits and beyond. For maximum hero points, why not build yourself a 695 Biposto replica? Or track down the interior and wheels from a Tributo Ferrari, or a Maserati Edizione...

Insurance group: 11

Insurance cost: £1,215

Top three mods: Abarth Brembo brakes, Maserati Edizione wheels, Tributo Ferrari interior



Honda Civic 1.4 (Mk8)

Despite being launched twelve years ago, the 8th-generation Civic still looks incredibly fresh, with its wraparound lights and weird double-glass tailgate situation. The interior's awesome too, with a deep-dished steering wheel and a dash that looks like something from a spaceship. The insurance isn't too heinous on the 1.4 (it's the same group as the Fiat 500 we were looking at, surprisingly), and while it's not exactly quick it makes up for it by being stylish!

And after you've found your feet as a new driver and built up the ability to insure a few mods, you can really embrace this low-and-slow vibe – a set of BC coilovers wound right down, a great big Kenwood audio install, and a swanky interior retrim by Plush will be ticking all your boxes. (Or just go in completely the opposite direction, sell it and buy a Type R, that's another option...!)

Insurance group: 11

Insurance cost: £1,465

Top three mods: Coilovers, stereo, retrim

Renault Clio 1.2 (Mk3 facelift)

Clios have gone hand-in-hand with hot hatch thrills since the uber-desirable 16v and Williams variants of the Mk1, and these playful chassis are just as willing with the lesser-engined variants. In the case of the Mk3, we're looking at a post-2009 facelifted version with a 1.2-litre motor at this budget point. It's not going to be quick, but it will be very cheap to run and it'll be pretty well equipped too. And hey, half of 'quick' is down to the driver, it's not all about the car. If you've got 75bhp and you're using every last horse, that's the same as driving a 150bhp car in a half-hearted manner, right?!

To make the 1.2 Clio quicker, don't bother trying to tune the engine. It's futile with this motor, really. No, you need to strip out all of the weight (back seats, spare wheel, soundproofing, everything you don't need), uprate the suspension, and fit decent tyres. You'll suddenly find it's faster than you think.

Insurance group: 6

Insurance cost: £1,215

Top three mods: Coilovers, quality tyres, thicker anti-roll bars





TOP 10: FIRST CARS

SEAT Ibiza 1.2 (Mk4)

The Mk4 Ibiza is a great option as it's basically a cheap Mk5 VW Polo – and the entry-level 1.2 is only insurance group 5! Your £3k budget will get you into a 2009-ish 1.2 S; while the 69bhp motor isn't going to set the world on fire, it's definitely going to keep your mum happy, and it runs on vapours so you won't be spending a lot on fuel. The interior may be a bit rental-spec, but the whole thing's screwed together to proper VW standards, and the exterior is very stylish too – those mean taillight clusters make it look very angry!

Once you start modding, you'll really be focusing on aesthetics rather than power; bear in mind that this 1.2 motor is the three-cylinder rather than the 1.2 TSI four-pot, and tuning options are limited. But the bare bones of a cool car are here – with a set of KW coilovers, some Rotiform LAS-Rs or 3SDM 0.08s, and the factory bodykit from an Ibiza Cupra or Bocanegra, you'll be hot to trot.

Insurance group: 5

Insurance cost: £1,215

Top three mods: Coilovers, wheels, OEM+ bodykit



Volvo C30 1.6

The Volvo C30 isn't really anyone's first choice for a first car, and with good reason: at insurance group 15, you may struggle to find quotes that are as cheap as, say, a Fiesta, and the same's true of the parts and servicing costs – the Volvo's a premium option, so it'll dent your wallet a bit more. But look at it this way: you're buying peace of mind – what could be safer than a Volvo...?

If you can make the numbers work for you, the C30 has a lot to offer. 99bhp from the 1.6 S is a decent amount of power for a first car, and you get a really nicely appointed ride with oodles of standard kit. The styling is crisp and funky – check out the weird glass tailgate! – and if you can find one with the R-Design option, you'll have 18in wheels, Xenons, a tasty bodykit and all kinds of sporty trim. We'd then give the interior a proper motorsport theme – a pair of Cobra buckets, some harnesses, a rollcage, extinguishers... because if your mum wants you to stay safe, this just takes it all to its logical conclusion.

Insurance group: 15

Insurance cost: £1,565

Top three mods: Rollcage, bucket seats, harnesses



Fiat Cinquecento

OK, we were a bit mean about Simon from *The Inbetweeners*' yellow Fiat, weren't we? So we thought we'd give it a fair go here because, while it's quite a bit older than the rest of the cars in this list, it's the one model where you're genuinely able to get an insurable hot hatch (well, a warm hatch anyway) as a first car – the Cinquecento Sporting is in a super-low insurance group, and it's got 'Sporting' written on it in red letters. Who could refuse?

The Sporting had the 1.1-litre 'FIRE' engine from the Punto, along with a close-ratio gearbox, front anti-roll bar and lowered suspension. To this, you can add a 40mm throttle body, some Stance+ front camber bolts, a K&N induction kit and a Sportex exhaust, and you'll have a proper little weapon that won't have the insurance company rubbing their hands together.

And it's a million times better than being a bus wanker.

Insurance group: 3

Insurance cost: £1,215

Top three mods: Camber bolts, bigger throttle body, noisy exhaust



How to get those premiums down...

Insurance for a first car is always going to sting a bit – companies have to factor in the lack of real-world experience, plus the unfortunate reality that some teenagers have been known to get excited and wrap their cars around lampposts. But fear not, you don't necessarily have to pay through the nose... insurers like Adrian Flux understand that enthusiasts like you are more likely to look after your pride and joy, and that if the worst should happen, a 'market value' payout won't cover the value of the mods you've made. All of this is factored into their quotes. And they have a few tips to offer to help bring your premiums down too: limited mileage is one – if you're only going to do a few thousand miles a year, this can lower your premium. Flux also offer show car policies for cars that only go out to events. There are a number of schemes – Pass Plus, IAM, Any Driver BTEC, DX Dynamics or Max Driver – which can knock up to 25-percent off the cost. Joining an owners club or notable online forum can reduce premiums, and installing a decent alarm is a must. If you have access to a garage, clear out all the old suitcases and Christmas decorations and keep your car in there. And remember – you have to declare every single one of your mods to the insurer (including

non-performance mods, stereo upgrades, everything), otherwise your insurance may be invalidated in the event of a claim. Adrian Flux can agree a value with you so that all your modifications are covered. And some mods, like aftermarket parking sensors, can even reduce your premium!

A spokesman for Adrian Flux Insurance said: "There are a few tips young drivers can try when shopping around for better value car insurance. We'd definitely advise them to explore installing a black box or telematic system because policies connected to these devices tend to be cheaper. Fitting an approved dashcam can also lead to discounts."

"Young drivers who have just recently passed their test could look into completing a Pass Plus course to further improve their driving skills. If it's financially possible, newer cars tend to be safer and more secure and are usually placed in a lower insurance group, meaning they're cheaper to insure."

Insurance quotes:

The quoted figures here are based on a 17-year old driver with a clean licence, no NCB, in full-time education, living with parents, TPF&T cover.



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DANGER MOUSE

The Fiat 500 is famously quite mouse-like - that's where its whole heritage stems from. But that doesn't mean these cars have to be meek; look at James Raper's Abarth 500...







When Fiat's Nuova 500 launched in 1957, it replaced the classic 500 'Topolino' which had been kicking around since the mid-1930s. 'Topolino' translates as 'little mouse' (and, interestingly, is also what the Italians call Mickey Mouse), and the rodent DNA could be traced right through the new-for-1957 model – it was small, cheeky, able to squeeze into improbably tight spaces, and fuelled by stolen cheese. OK, maybe not the last one...

The Nuova 500 was a cultural icon, so it was inevitable that Fiat would try to appropriate and cash in on some of its ingrained cuteness when the new-wave Fiat 500 launched in 2007. Critics were suspicious of the unashamed retro styling cues, although the massive sales figures suggest that, along with contemporary rival offerings from the MINI camp, the public can't get enough of cute retro city runabouts.

The 500 we have before the lens today, however, is not cute. Nor is it in any way mouse-like. What it is, in fact, is very angry indeed, and a little bit scary to boot.

A large part of this is owing to the Trofeo Race Series that became part of the BTCC TOCA package back in 2008 – works motorsport shells were mated to Punto EsseEsse engines to create 180bhp race cars: the Abarth Assetto Corse was the result. It's this race livery that you see here on James Raper's 500, lovingly applied by the vinyl junkies at Paintkillers. This is more than just a baby Fiat with a flash wrap, of course – it's essentially a custom-built and road-legal Assetto Corse racer, with a whole bunch of unique tweaks that'd never have occurred to the works race team.

So, how do you come up with the idea for a build like this? Well, in



Corbeau buckets



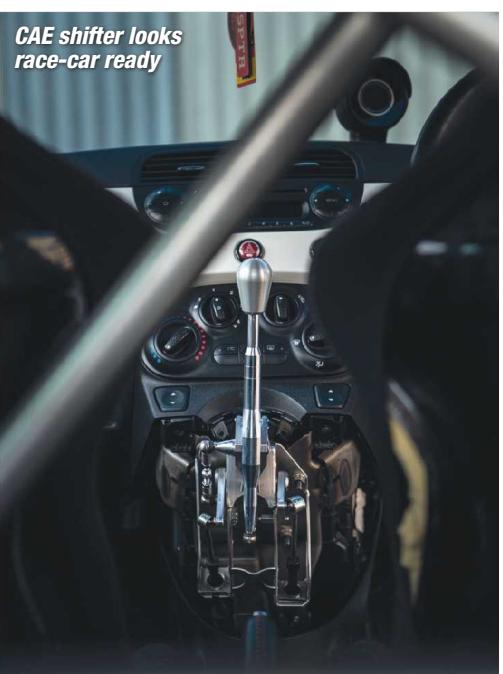
James's case he's no stranger to small Fiats – although it's safe to say they've never been quite as aggressive as this one. "This is my third Fiat," he explains. "I had a Seicento Sporting in yellow, then a Punto in blue which I put wheels and springs on and fully smoothed the back end. After that I actually moved on to a Mk7 Fiesta Zetec-S with a huge audio boot build, then a smoothed SEAT Ibiza, which was slammed on some Cast 13 wheels. After that I got a Jaguar X-Type to try and be sensible – although that didn't work out too well."

No, we can see that. So why a 500 this time? "I chose the Abarth because I thought it looked amazing and had a lot of character," reasons James. "I bought it with the intention of making it stand out from the rest, as I hadn't seen many around me and those that I had seen were standard ones driven around by middle-aged people! I bought one to see what they could look like when done properly..."

Admirable sentiment, and he wasn't just paying lip service to the idea either; a quick glance over the spec list reveals that James was deadly serious about proving that the teeny Fiat platform could be turned into something cool. The Abarth is a strong base, thanks in large part to its effervescent 1.4-litre turbo motor, and there are plenty available on the second-hand market.

Finding one and finding a good one are naturally two different things, but this guy lucked out by coming across a solid example just ten minutes away from his house. How fortunate is that? He found it advertised online at 8pm on a Friday, and was driving about and raising hell in it by 11am on Saturday. Nice when things just work out, isn't it?

"When I took it for a test drive, the salesman suggested I give it some





Yellow lights? Hell yeah!

stick – and I knew from then that I was having it,” laughs James. “They told me I’d have to wait a week for them to prep it, but I told them not to bother because I was so desperate to drive it.” It turned out that the desperation wasn’t just for the driving, but to crack on with the project.

Showing true commitment to the Fast Car ethos, he dropped into STG Performance on the way home and immediately had it booked in for a cat-back exhaust system. No sense twiddling your thumbs and procrastinating, is there? And then, in the twinkling of an eye, James had found a good deal on a set of JOM coilovers and had them fitted at Crisp Tuning; by this point he’d admitted to himself that he was fully committed to the project, and forked out a small fortune to get a high-end CAE shifter sent over from Germany. That was shipped home on a 48-hour service – because, as you’ve probably deduced by now, James isn’t the sort of person to muck about and he really doesn’t like to wait – at which point it was back to Crisp Tuning to get the mighty lever installed.

“The shifter is by far my favourite modification,” he grins. “It totally changes the way the car drives, making it feel like you’re driving a race car all the time!”

With this massive dose of inspiration spurring the project on, the ideas started tumbling in an endless spiral of delicious awesomeness. Shane at STG Performance once again found the keys in his hand, as James charged him with the task of custom-fabricating a rollcage, and it was at this point that Joe at Paintkillers was drafted in to apply that polar-bear-cool race livery. This again totally transformed the car – James reckons people started shouting ‘It looks decent for a Fiat!’ at him in the street, gawd bless the Great British public – and things really were getting a bit bonkers by this stage.

“I kept booking it in to STG for crazy things to happen,” James grins, just manically enough for us to step back a little and subtly make sure we’re fully acquainted with the exits. “The custom exhaust was next – it’s got a side-exit, and also a teardrop front-exit; it’s switchable on a remote-control valve, so I can have a loud or a quiet option.” Ingenious stuff, although we would suggest that ‘quiet’ isn’t exactly the word. This thing snorts and rasps like a jar full of enraged wasps – ‘quiet’ is loud, and ‘loud’ is LOUD.

“Then Shane at STG told me he’d like to try and make a race-style rear diffuser as he’d never made one before,” he continues, “so I gave him the keys and let him work his magic! After that I finished the interior off with a set of Corbeau ClubSports which I found on eBay getting sold locally for an absolute steal.” This all adds up to a full-on race car vibe;

the outside makes its own statement with the nouveau-retro livery mixing with snorting pipes and Abarth EsseEsse rims (along with those yellow lights, we just love yellow lights), and the interior must make for a hilarious experience when pottering to the shops – that CAE shifter, the buckets and harnesses, the cage, the window nets, plus the fact that it’s all stripped out... it’s more Hangar Straight than High Street, and it totally reframes the 500’s inherent cheekiness.

“Since the car has been completed, it’s got into a lot of the big shows and even took home the Judges’ Choice award at Elsecar at the Races back in April,” says James. All of which is testament to the quality of the build – it’s not just a bunch of zany ideas that have been thrown together to make a point; it’s a bunch of zany ideas that have been flawlessly executed and beautifully engineered.

There are few things as cool as a road-going race car, and the fact that this one also happens to be a Fiat 500 must take a few people by surprise as it buzzes amongst the commuter traffic. It may have the DNA of a mouse, but it’s evolved into some sort of enraged tiger... which is obviously impossible and not how evolution works, but that is sort of the point. James built this car to prove that this cutesy little runabout could be cool and, by achieving a number of seemingly impossible things, that’s precisely what he’s done. It’s a mouse that roars. And that’s one of the scariest concepts we can imagine. 



Side-exit pipe is a neat touch

STYLING:

Abarth Assetto Corse livery (wrapped by Paintkillers), custom aluminium rear diffuser by STG Performance, canards, bonnet vent, yellow light tints, stubby aerial, quick-release bumper fasteners

TUNING:

1.4-litre turbo, custom Ramair induction, custom blow-off valve, 2.5-inch custom decat exhaust system by STG Performance with front-exit teardrop and side-exit – on remote-control valve, intercooler with custom hard piping by STG Performance, remapped to 175 bhp by West Yorkshire Tuning, 5-speed manual with CAE shifter

CHASSIS:

7x17-inch Abarth EsseEsse wheels, 16mm rear spacers, JOM coilovers, DNA Racing Components lightweight lower arms, OMP racing front upper and lower strut braces

INTERIOR:

Stripped rear, custom rollcage by STG Performance, Corbeau Clubsport bucket seats, OMP 350mm deep-dish steering wheel on Sparco snap-off boss, Broadway rear view mirror, window net, love-heart tsurikawa handle

THANKS:

STG Performance for listening to my stupid ideas and putting them into place, James Cowley for encouraging my ridiculous ideas, my girlfriend Chelsea for putting up with me and the car, Dave, Jim Novak, Crisp Tuning, and Paintkillers

Race livery sets this 500 apart



“I kept booking it in to STG for crazy things to happen”





www.ap-suspensions.co.uk | sales@ap-suspensions.co.uk





AIR LIFT PERFORMANCE 3S KITS, FROM £599

What you're looking at here may purport (oooh using those posh words again? – Jules) to be one of the Air Lift Performance manifolds you see on oodles of feature cars here in FC. That is until you see the price of course, and that's because this little box of tricks is perhaps the most significant development in air ride hardware for quite a while. This is their brand new standalone 3S manifold – an entry-level item specifically developed to bring air to the masses!

It's a bloody clever idea too. Basically speaking, this puppy enables manual control of up to four bags, but with all the advantages and simplicity that comes with an integrated-valve manifold system. For starters that means you don't need to mess around running loads of lines through your car to fit manual paddle valves and gauges, but that's not the REALLY clever bit. Nope, this one also has built-in Bluetooth connectivity, so you can control everything

from their free mobile app. In other words, there's no need to shell out for any controller or switches if you're looking to keep everything stealth... or even more wallet-friendly for that matter.

That said, if like many of us you prefer hitting buttons, you can also specify a number of installation harnesses that enable choices like the fitment of a manual switch box, an APV2 controller (like the V2 items), or the ALP3 display that you get with the top-flight 3H/3P management.

As you'd expect, there's also a choice of manifolds to cater for 1/4 or 3/8 NPT airlines too. For the money, you just can't go wrong.

All in all, we can see these helping to introduce a whole load of more budget-conscious modders to the wonders of air ride, and that can only ever be a good thing. Nice one Air Lift!

www.airliftperformance.com
www.caraudiosecurity.com



TOP TUNING GEAR

BOLA B18, FROM £895 (SET)

We love a classically-designed rim here at FC, that goes without saying, but sometimes, just sometimes, we hanker after something absolutely bonkers-looking too. And that's exactly what we've got here with this new addition to the Bola range. Although the B18 seems a tad more batshit than most, like all their other cast wheels, these funky 'intertwined' 10-spokers incorporate PCD pockets, meaning they can custom drill any stud pattern between 5x98 and 5x130. Of course, that also means they will fit pretty much anything, but from the staggered sizes on offer (and the fact that there's a tasty deep concave on the wider versions), we suspect these will be most popular on the more Germanic cruisers out there. Most likely the ones with owners who like to do everything with a twist... or ten. It takes big brass balls to bring a rim like this to the UK market, but we respect that. Hats off.

www.bolawheels.co.uk

Sizes: 8.5 and 9.5x19

PCD: Any 5x98-5x130

Offset: ET20-38

Finishes: Gunmetal/polished, gloss black/polished, silver/polished, matt bronze



BORLA M3 EXHAUST, £1525

Posher than the Queen's diamond-encrusted underclangers, that's the only way to describe the offerings from US firm Borla. These guys started over 30-years ago making concours systems for Rolls-Royces and have been lovingly sculpting pant-wettingly beautiful stainless-steel art ever since. But why are we only telling you this now? Well, it's mostly because we can now actually get them here in the UK without Her Majesty's customs taking a bite out of your wallet. That's thanks to Tarmac Sportz who are now bringing in a whole selection, including this drop-dead sexy item for the E92 M3.

None of them are cheap of course, but that's kind of the point – you can't hang the Mona Lisa on your wall for a fiver and a bag of chips, right? And you can't hang one of these on your motor without a couple of quid either. Although, in the quest for maximum kudos points, they actually seem like quite the bargain.

www.tarmacsportz.co.uk

YET MORE FUNKY HOOPS...

Bola FLA, from £995

Another Bola wheel in the very same pages? Yep, that's how we roll! Besides there's no denying that this design is another funky addition to their portfolio, only this time it's a little reminiscent of various 'twist' wheels of yesteryear.

Still, the totally modern bit comes with the fact that these are flow formed, which means that, even when they're machined to their maximum offset (ET58), they only weigh in at 9.9kg. That clearly isn't much for 19-inches of pure pleasure is it? Nice finishes too.

www.bolawheels.co.uk

Sizes: 8.5x19

PCD: Any 5x98 – 5x130

Offset: ET10-58

Finishes: Gloss gunmetal, gloss black, matt black, matt bronze



POWER MAXED GREEN STUFF REMOVER, £8

The bods at Power Maxed certainly aren't messing around with this all-business new product. First there's the name, which pretty much says it all, in a particularly Ronseal-like fashion. And then there's the fact that you get a whole litre for just eight quid.

So what actual 'green stuff' is it designed to remove? Well, it's clearly not for killing aliens or a cure for some sort of tropical knob rot (*classy – Jules*), instead it's packed with special algaecides that are designed to tackle moss build-up, green algae and black streaks. In other words, this one reaches the depths that other cleaners can't, and comes in particularly useful for tough deposits on paintwork, rubber seals and convertible roofs. That goes double if you tend to leave your projects exposed to the elements for any length of time. No frills and no fannying about, love it!

www.powermaxed.com



MISHIMOTO CIVIC TYPE R INTAKE, £420

Filtration prowess isn't the only thing that makes this new kit from Mishimoto one of the very best on the market, it's more that this one is scientifically proven to offer a 42-percent increase in airflow for a 16.7whp gain on an otherwise standard FK8.

There's no denying it looks the part with its CNC-machined aluminium MAF housing, powder-coated airbox and oversized silicone intake pipe too. But what's even more mind boggling is that it's been specifically designed to maintain safe air-fuel ratios so you don't need any specialist mapping to actually see the power hike.

www.mishimoto.co.uk



DIRENZA FOCUS ST GEARBOX TORQUE LINK, £120

Here's a simple mod that can make all the difference on any tuned (Mk2 or Mk3) Focus ST. It'll also stop a common problem on the big, bad Ford, one that's technically known as 'the engine and 'box flopping around like a right bastard!' Obviously, this is just as bad as it sounds and can seriously affect not just power transfer to the wheels, but handling and stability too. The good news though, is that this uprated aluminium and polyurethane item is the cure and will also help to maximise engine output by reducing movement and vibration under acceleration.

Easily one of the most cost-effective tweaks you'll ever make to your ST-badged Blue Oval.

www.direnza.co.uk



MOUNTNEY TRADITIONAL RANGE, FROM £60

There's classics and then there's classics, and Mountney were making some of the world's finest steering wheels when our G was still knocking around in Pampers looking for a tit to chew on (*you mean last week? – Jules*). It's a retro brand with plenty of pedigree on and off the track, and it's good to see they've gone right back to their roots with their new 'Traditional Range' here. They've even decided to use their original 'M' logo with these stunning little 3-spokers, a nice, albeit very subtle, nod to the old-skool. Available in selected finishes and 12-17-inch diameters, there's nothing like a spot of nostalgia, and these hark back to when British engineering ruled the game.

www.mountneyclassic.co.uk

Autostar Essen, from £540 (set)

The face on these new Essen wheels seem to stick out for miles and this, combined with a few cheeky bolts, makes them appear to be much wider than they actually are, even without the use of super-stretched rubber. To be fair that's not an easy optical illusion to pull off, but what grabs us even more is the price. Come to think of it, there can't be many motors out there these won't suit either. Lovely stuff.

www.autostarwheels.com

Sizes: 8.5 and 9.5x18

PCDs: 5x100, 5x112, 5x120

Finishes: Silver polished lip



2Forge ZF1, from £720

OK, so we're well aware that the ZF1 isn't a new wheel, but after bowing to popular demand, this flow-formed multi-spoke stunner is now available in a selection of 17-inch sizes, along with a host of custom-drilled 4-stud options. Weight wise, they range between 7.6kg for the 7.5x17 to just 8.9kg for the big boy 10x18. You asked, they delivered.

www.2forgewheels.com

Sizes: 7.5, 8, 9, 9.5x17, 8, 9 10x18

PCD: Any 4x98-4,114.3,

5x98-5x130 **Offset:** ET0-51

Finishes: Satin black, gunmetal, silver, white



LIBERTY WALK APPAREL

We might not all be fortunate enough to build a genuine LB Performance car, but that doesn't mean we can't represent our favourite Japanese enhancement brand. That's right, it's not just our cars that can get some serious LB street presence, but our bodies too, as Liberty Walk Europe have just launched their own clothing range...

T-Shirts, from £30

Available in a host of colours and styles, from simple logo designs to limited edition runs, these new Ts from Liberty Walk will become your go to garment. Don't worry about the dropping temperatures, you'll still have plenty of opportunities to show-off your new T when your nan sets the thermostat to volcanic levels.

Snapback, from £30

The sun might be disappearing for the next few months but your mum will tell you that you lose the majority of your body heat through your head (just don't tell her that's a myth), so if that isn't the perfect excuse to rep one of these awesome snapbacks from Liberty Walk, we don't know what is. Get involved.

Hoody, from £30

As the nights draw in and the temperatures plummet there couldn't be a better time to invest in a new hoody, and these Liberty Walk releases will become your new favourite. Available in red, black and grey, in a number of designs, there are plenty of options to get excited about. Just don't take too long deciding on what ones to add to your wardrobe as these are selling fast!

www.libertywalk-eu.com

WIN, WIN, WIN, WIN and WIN

Don't miss next month's magazine where we will be running a competition and giving away £600 worth of Liberty Walk clothing! Five winners will take away a Liberty Walk hoody, t-shirt and snapback cap.



PROTECTION, MADE SIMPLE



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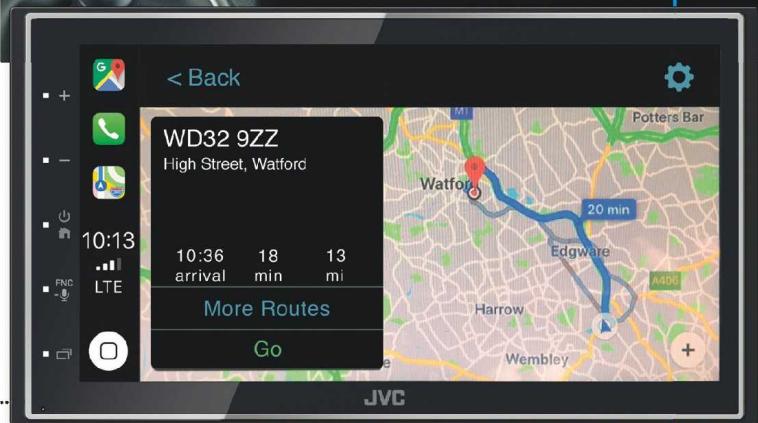


JVC KW M745DBT Price: TBC

JVC has long been one of the leading car audio manufacturers in the world. In 2018 they have seriously upped their game with a killer new line up. This is the latest product we've seen from their multimedia range and it's a great looking piece of kit.

The lovely people at JVC call this the KW-M745DBT Digital Media Receiver. New model numbers aside, this is a very slick looking doubleDIN system that you absolutely need if you want Apple CarPlay or Android Auto in your car for a very wallet friendly price. The 6.8-inch capacitive touch screen allows you to easily control the unit. As we type these words, iOS12 has been launched and this week sees Google Maps integration added to CarPlay. This is incredible news. Google maps is the go to navigation app for most people and once you have this upgrade in your car you can use Google to guide you to your destination safely and legally.

When it comes to connectivity, the features list is crazy. Are you ready? There's automatic pairing of iPhone & Android phones. Once you've connected quickly and easily you can use Bluetooth wireless technology to make and receive hands free calls, there's Bluetooth voice dialling (voice recognition compatible mobile phone required) and phone book access. The Bluetooth functionality allows you to

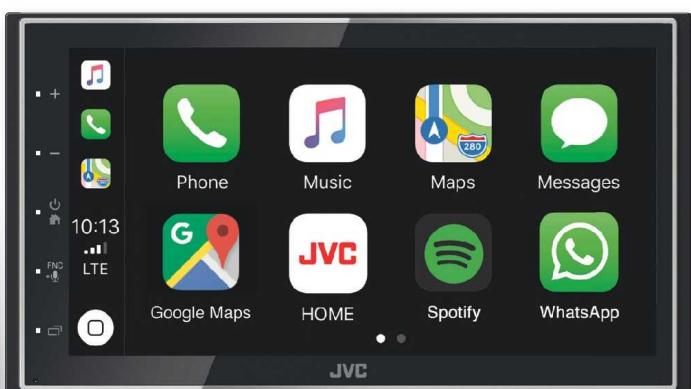


stream audio and control/skip the tracks your listening to via this JVC unit, too.

Seamless Spotify integration is included and this allows you to directly access the popular music streaming service by connecting your compatible device via USB. Once hooked-up, you can listen to your favourite playlists, songs, and albums at the touch of the screen.

The USB connection features 1.5A charging, so you can keep your phone's battery topped up whilst you're on the move. One of the best features this unit boasts is its short body chassis design. In English, this means that the unit itself is smaller and requires less depth. The result? It takes up less space behind your dashboard. This makes it easier to install in some vehicles where space is really tight. Ideal for Japanese cars and some German vehicles where it's sometimes really tricky to get a doubleDIN multimedia fitted nicely. This KW-M745DBT by JVC is an absolute cracker of a unit. 5/5 stars for sure. Do a buy!

uk.jvc.com



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www.sealey.co.uk



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- Size (W x D x H): 84 x 34 x 173mm.



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Lithium RECHARGEABLE

12V



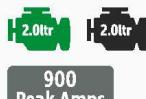
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B	SL69S	1000A	12V	12V vehicles up to a 10 cylinder engine	£159.95	£124.95	£149.94

Roadstarts Jump Starters

Model No. RS1B is suitable for starting vehicles with 4 cylinder petrol or diesel engines up to 2ltr.
Model No. RS102B is suitable for starting vehicles with 6 cylinder petrol engines up to 3.5ltr and 4 cylinder diesel engines up to 3ltr.
Model No. RS103B is suitable for starting vehicles with 8 cylinder petrol engines up to 5ltr and 6 cylinder diesel engines up to 3.5ltr.
Model No. RS105B is suitable for starting 12V vehicles with 8 cylinder petrol engines up to 6ltr and 8 cylinder diesel engines up to 4.8ltr. Suitable for starting 24V vehicles with 6 cylinder petrol engines up to 3.5ltr and 6 cylinder diesel engines up to 3ltr.

NEW



900 Peak Amps

Front panel displays internal or external battery charge levels and includes an integral LED work light.

Reverse polarity and short circuit protection with audible warning.



Use as a 12V power supply - includes two vehicle accessory sockets.

Mains charger with automatic power cut-off prevents damage to battery whilst charging.

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A	RS1B	200A	900A	12V	USB - 5V/2.4A, 2 x 12V Port	0.6mtr	6.7kg	£169.95	£129.95	£155.94
B	RS102B	300A	1200A	12V	USB - 5V/2.4A, 2 x 12V Port	0.6mtr	7.8kg	£239.95	£189.95	£227.94
C	RS103B	420A	1900A	12V	USB - 5V/2.4A, 2 x 12V Port	0.7mtr	12.3kg	£399.95	£279.95	£335.94
D	RS105B	12V/24V - 590A/290A	12V/24V - 2400A/1400A	12V/24V	2 x 12V Port	0.7mtr	14.5kg	£499.95	£379.95	£455.94

Single 5V 2.4A USB output (Model No's RS1B, RS102B & RS103B).



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Brake dust, salt and road grime - all the mucky stuff that you don't want on your wheels for any length of time, and the very reason we've tested a gazillion wheel cleaners in FC over the years. Yep, wheels are expensive, for many they're THE biggest aftermarket investment, and most of us think we keep ours in tip-top condition... but do we really?

Aside from looking good, there's a certain safety aspect to it all too. If left unchecked, brake dust will eat into your wheels like nothing else on the planet, and this sort of corrosion not only damages the finish but can eventually compromise structural integrity too. When you look at it like that, it's actually pretty surprising that we only tend to clean off the part of the wheel that people actually see. Often leaving the insides to bubble away like a good 'un. I mean, when was the last time you looked at the back of your wheels? I'd bet my last Rolo that they're not as spotless as the faces! And that's my whole point.

Of course, there are the hardcore detailers who swear by taking the wheels off to give them a proper clean, but who's got the time or energy for that? Here in the real world we need an easy solution, but can it really be as simple as a longer brush?

PRICE: £19.95
www.autofinesse.co.uk



The Product

Simplicity is an art form in itself, who said that? (Er, you did, just now – Jules.) But it's still a mistake to assume that this new 'Barrel Brush' from Auto Finesse is nothing more than 10-inches of bristly goodness. When you delve a little deeper, you'll see it's actually very well thought out.

Granted, this one is a tad more lengthily than most, and that's what enables it to get in there deep, so to speak. But, as it's a product for enthusiasts made by enthusiasts, there's a few nice touches that make this one safer to use. Obviously, this automatically makes it a godsend for those running seriously expensive rims.

For a start the scratchless bristles are designed for tough cleaning without marring your wheels. In fact, they're so soft, it's more like something you'd used to dust your Nan's antiques rather than scrubbing away hardcore grime.

It's practical too, the rod can be easily bent to get around brake calipers and behind spokes. There's also a rubber safety cap on the rod and a rubber disc before the wooden handle to prevent accidental scratching, all small details, but ones that make all the difference. Like I said, being enthusiasts, they've thought of everything.



Midge's Verdict

Admittedly it's a bloody simple test this month, but that just goes to show the genius of the product. To be honest, it works really well, it's easy and it makes me wonder why all wheel brushes aren't like this. Suddenly it seems like a bit of a no-brainer and, now I've seen it, I know nothing else is going to compare.

Of course, I understand that not everyone is a die-hard detailing freak, but surely it makes sense to everyone that any part of your wheel you don't clean properly will eventually be susceptible to corrosion. Spending 20-quid here isn't about showing off in the local show 'n' shine, it's simply an investment in the future of your hoops.

In a nutshell: Great for everyone, not just the detailing obsessed.

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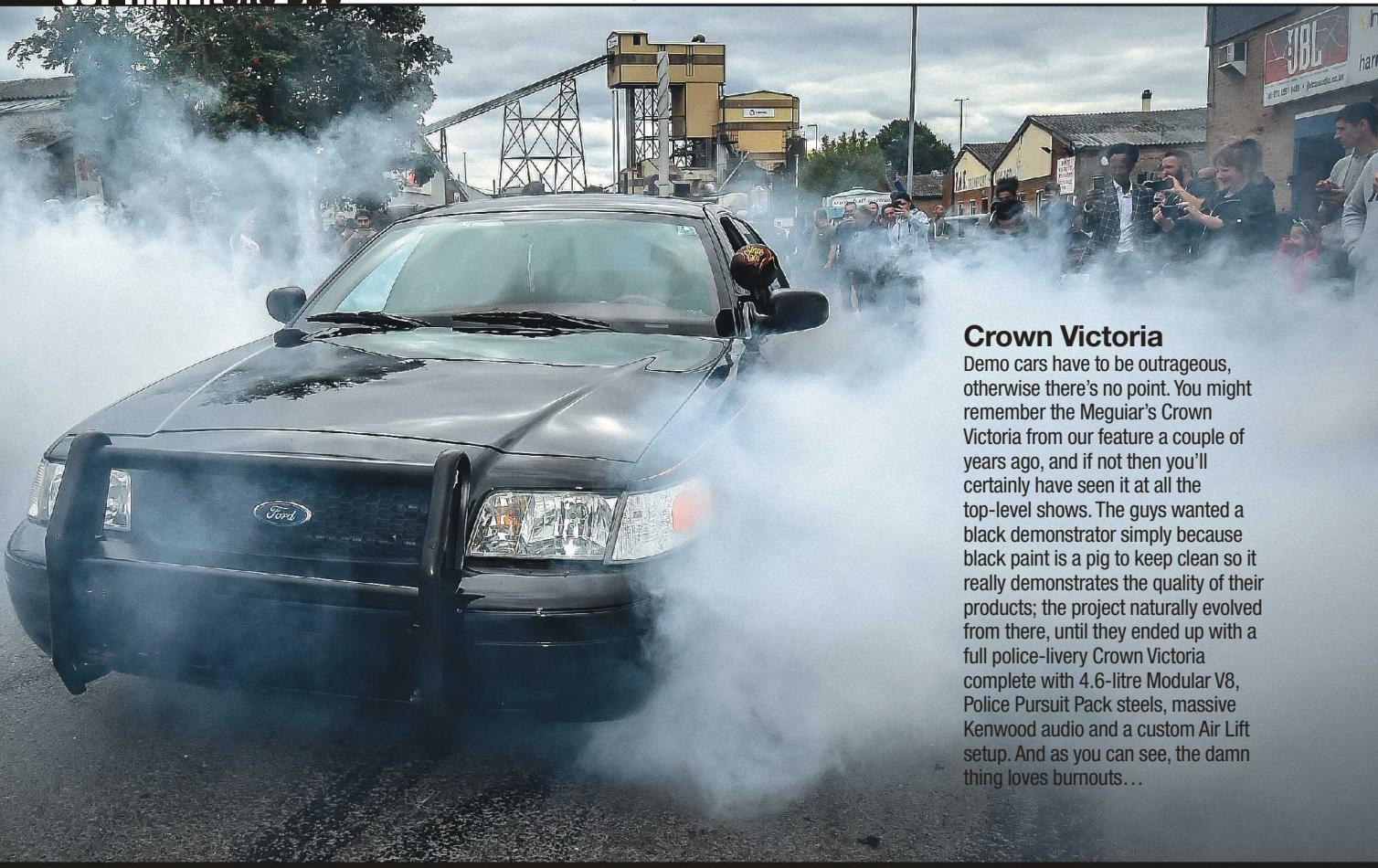
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Crown Victoria

Demo cars have to be outrageous, otherwise there's no point. You might remember the Meguiar's Crown Victoria from our feature a couple of years ago, and if not then you'll certainly have seen it at all the top-level shows. The guys wanted a black demonstrator simply because black paint is a pig to keep clean so it really demonstrates the quality of their products; the project naturally evolved from there, until they ended up with a full police-livery Crown Victoria complete with 4.6-litre Modular V8, Police Pursuit Pack steels, massive Kenwood audio and a custom Air Lift setup. And as you can see, the damn thing loves burnouts...

CAR AUDIO SECURITY BBQ 2018

We head to Hayes for some sizzling BBQ and even hotter rides...

Food-and-drink-related car events are always going to succeed; look at the massive popularity of the Cars 'n' Coffee phenomenon that's been sweeping the UK for the past few years. Then there's the Sunday Scramble in Bicester (which may or may not involve eggs, we'll get back to you), and of course, Goodwood's Breakfast Club, which is now so popular they have to restrict numbers.

So it makes perfect sense for the scene legends at Car Audio Security to theme their annual get-together around a BBQ, sizzling sausages beside hot motors and

flipping steaks like Tony Soprano. Cruise up in your modded ride, tuck into a burger, and make the most of the gloriously hot summer weather. (Remember that? Good, wasn't it?)

As we'd expect from these guys, there was a laid-back vibe and a stellar variety of cars on display, ranging from the sublime to the beautifully ridiculous, and naturally there were burnouts aplenty. To

give the show its proper title, the Air Lift Show & Shine BBQ Presented by Car Audio Security wasn't just about snarfing meat either, there were awards and top-ten trophies presented, and goodies handed out by the event's sponsors – which included Rotiform, Clifford, GoPro, Alpine, Rockford Fosgate and Kenwood. All in all, it's pretty much the perfect day out, right? See you there next year!



Spin 'em up, son!





Peppermint MINI

Always a pleasure to see Rhianna Lansberry's R50 MINI One airing out among its low-down peers. You don't get a lot of MINIs running air-ride, which is precisely why she opted to fit an Air Lift Performance system – just to shake things up. And we love it when people are different for the sake of it. The fat Porsche twists are a great touch too, and the interior's bristling with Corbeau seats and custom air/audio install. The best part though? This is her first car. How cool is that?



BMW E30 doing its thing

Custom Fiesta

Having spent six years in the garage building what is arguably the world's finest Mk4 Fiesta, Danny Hetherington certainly isn't shy about showing it off. He gets out and about to a lot of show-and-shine events, as well he should because the details on this thing are insane: as well as running a 1.7 Puma motor on bike carbs, the whole thing is just dripping in unique touches, from the secret door poppers and the hand-crafted wide arches to the custom dash and Mk1 Cortina bench seats. That Land Rover Kaikoura Stone Pearl paint really pops in the sunshine too.



Smokin' hot 'Rothmans' BM



Meguiar's in the house!



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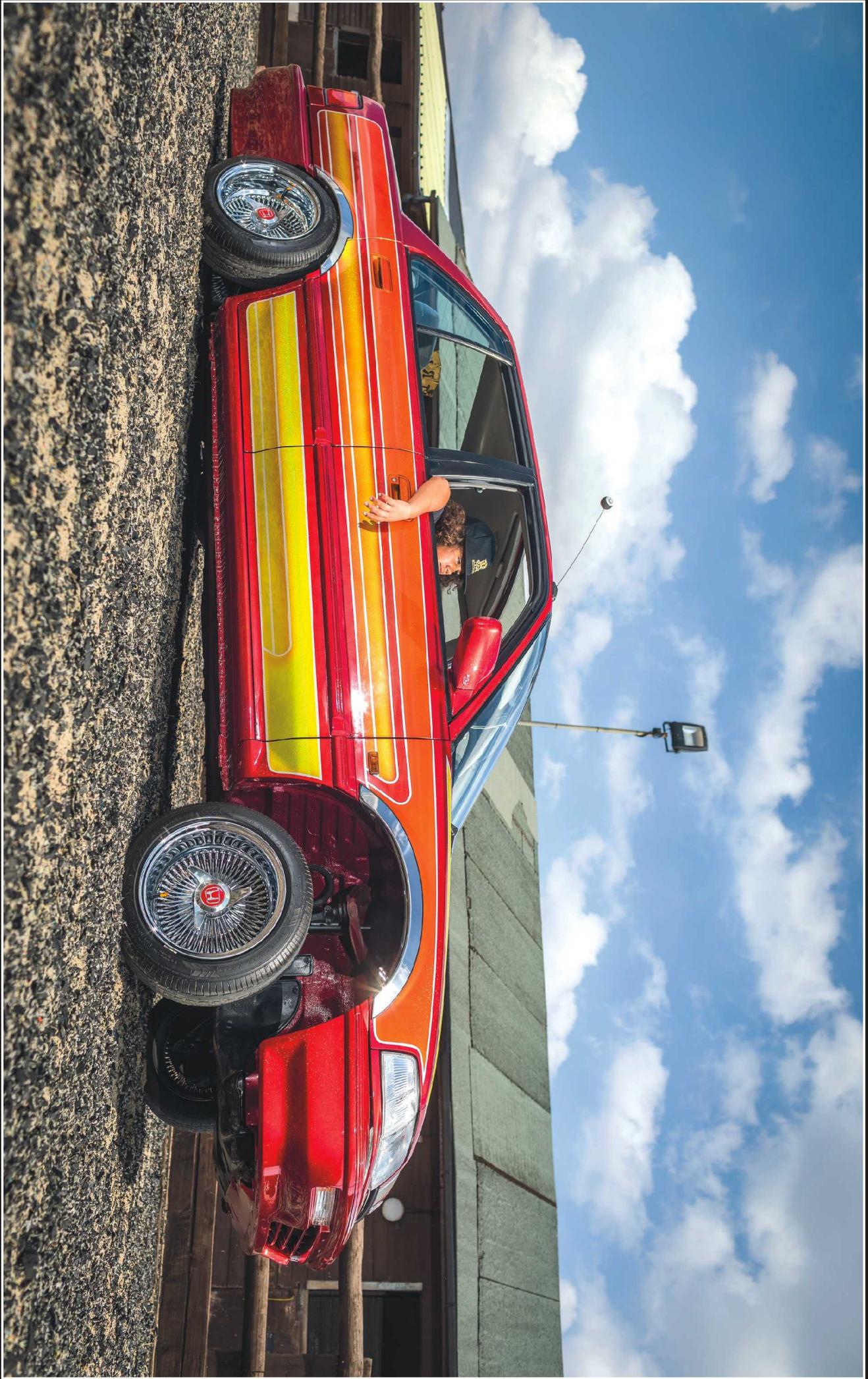




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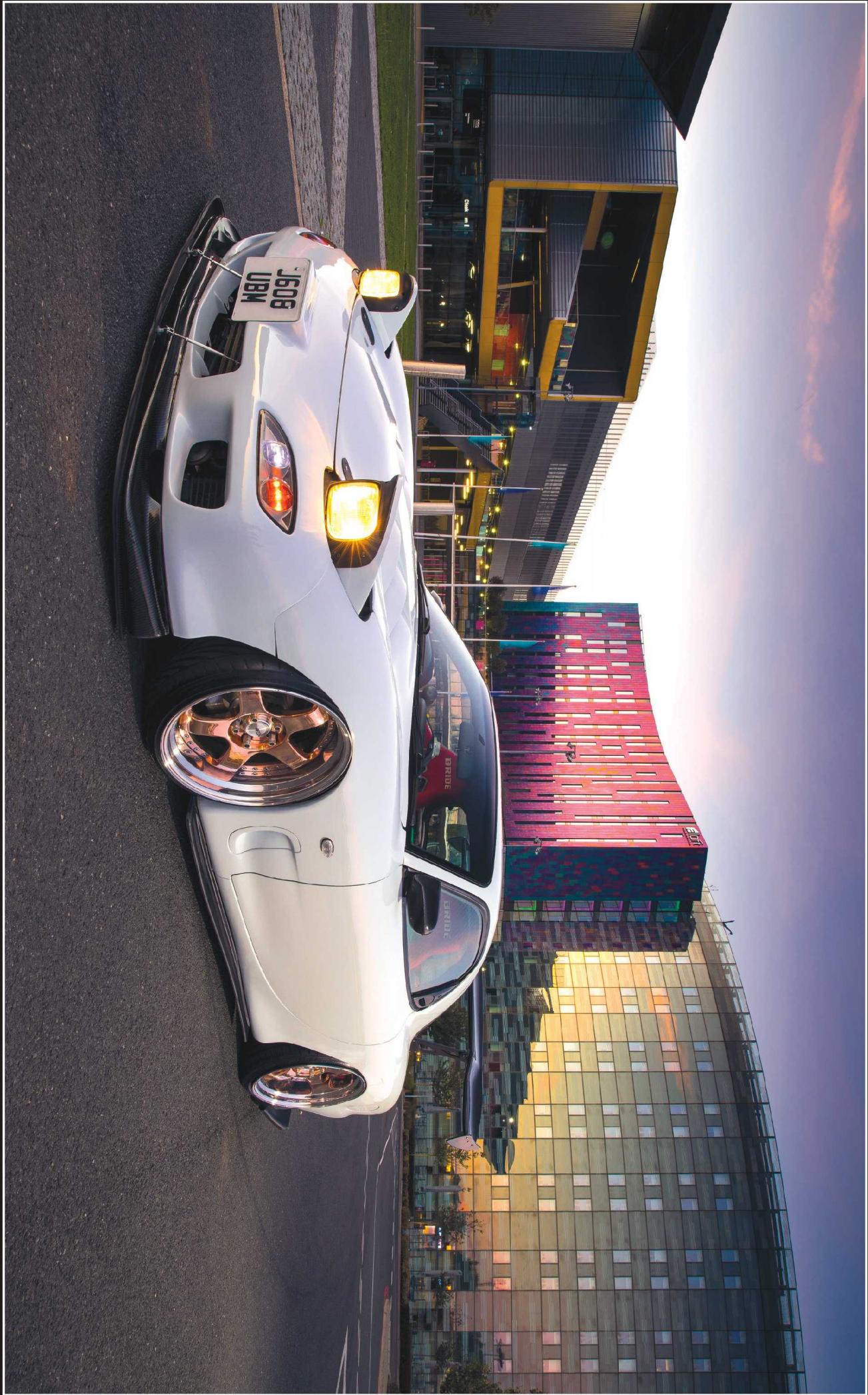
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Kid 'N' Play

The coolest car on the UK lowrider scene? Straight outta Lay 'N' Play, it's a Honda Civic of all things. And would you believe it's a 10-year-old kid hitting the switches...?





Lowriders – they're all Impalas and Coupe De Villes, aren't they? No, far from it... let Pete Blackhurst clear it up for you: "In lowriding, the margins between cool and bad taste are carefully managed by individuality and creativity," he says, "so in effect it doesn't really matter what people think, there's no real prerequisites, your ride is an expression of you." So is it cool to run a 1980s Honda Civic in the lowrider scene? Hell yeah, it is – particularly when we tell you that this particular Civic is owned by a cool-as-a-cucumber 10-year-old dude named Sol.

Given that Sol's running a very busy schedule of planning world domination and climbing trees and stuff, we're talking to his old man Pete about the car, and it turns out that all of this brightly-coloured and hydraulic-powered whimsy is genetic. It stems right back to Pete's own childhood.

"As a kid I worked at my dad's shop on Saturdays," he recalls, "and he'd send me to the local newsagents to buy magazines and Hot Wheels along with a bag of chips and curry sauce for lunch. I always liked hot rods, customs and classic Fords; my neighbours had a Mk1 Mexico and a 105E, and when I finally passed my driving test at 18 my parents bought me a Mk3 Fiesta – which wasn't so cool back then. I quickly swapped that for a Mk2 Cortina 1300 Deluxe – a rusty piece of crap that was delivered to my house with a dodgy MoT, it was a huge mistake but it almost lasted a year before falling to bits!"

Undeterred, Pete bought another Cortina, threw on some rims and graphics, and took it to his first show, Run to the Sun in Newquay – a mere 300 miles from home. This was where he saw his first lowrider up close, and at this point everything changed: the Vauxhall Viva owned by Sideshow Bob of Lo-Rdz Lowrider CC drove past on three wheels, and from that moment he knew he was hooked.

"The next step was research," says Pete. "I was around 19 when I found the internet forums and chatrooms of Unity and Lo-Rdz; the great rivalry and amazing cars that came out of those early days saw me joining up with Unity and planning my first lowrider build. The Cortina was replaced with a 1979 Oldsmobile Cutlass, and with the help of fellow club member Stevie D, wire wheels and juice came quick and I headed out to every show, meet and gathering I could find. The Cutlass was a coming of age for me, meeting up with the guys I saw at shows and making friends, it's only now

fifteen years later I realise what effect it had on me and some of my lowrider bros."

Not long after joining Unity, Pete, Stevie D and another friend Little Gray set up Tru-Rydaz, a UK-based club that now has members worldwide, and its influence is spreading relentlessly. In the small village where Pete lives, the Civic gets to play with an Impala, an El Camino and a Lincoln Town Car, and the guys have set up a lowrider lifestyle brand, Lay 'N' Play, which is the UK's voice for the scene on social media as well as organising displays at shows like Gravity, Fitted UK, Mod Nats, Ultimate Stance and the



Wire wheels: essential lowrider kit

“I wanted to build something that would cross over between styles”



HOT RIDE: HONDA CIVIC



Retro Rides Weekender.

"Through all the partying and lowriding, I became dad to a badass dude called Sol – in fact I was in Vegas at the Lowrider Super Show when he was born!" says Pete. "It was a life-changer, and I wanted him to be part of the action too; not long after he could stand and walk, he was attending shows, his first Tru-Rydaz shirt came next, followed by hitting switches on my cars in front of crowds and now his own whip, the Civic."

That's right. Pete's passion for the low-down lifestyle is so strong that he had to build a car for his son to play with at shows – and how many 10-year-olds can boast that they own a car, let alone a unique show-stopper like this?

But why a Civic, though – bit of an odd choice for a lowrider isn't it? Well, it all goes back to what Pete was saying at the start: there are no prerequisites, the car's an expression of yourself. "The Civic was a break from the norm for me," he says. "I've only ever really owned RWD cars, American, UK and German stuff; Sol was hankering after his own car to hit switches at shows and my El Camino was tired from a hard year of shows and events. So a plan was formed – I wanted to step away from my usual comfort zone, build something that was cool in LA in the '90s but never really had its time here; something Japanese, boxy and small. Around a year ago the Civic popped up on eBay not far from me, and a deal was struck to bring it home."

The Honda was completely standard as-bought; a few dents and some frilly sills, but nothing too hard to fix. The plan was simple: get it all straight, fit hydraulics and wire wheels, and give it some awesome paint. Sol is partially colour-blind so bold patterns would make sense, and essentially it should look like something from an early-nineties rap video.

Now, fitting hydraulics to most American cars is fairly straightforward, but adding juice to a monocoque requires a bit more lateral thinking and ingenuity – it basically involves ripping out the struts and replacing them with hydraulic rams which have to be modified to fit. It's not like you just buy an off-the-shelf juice kit for a



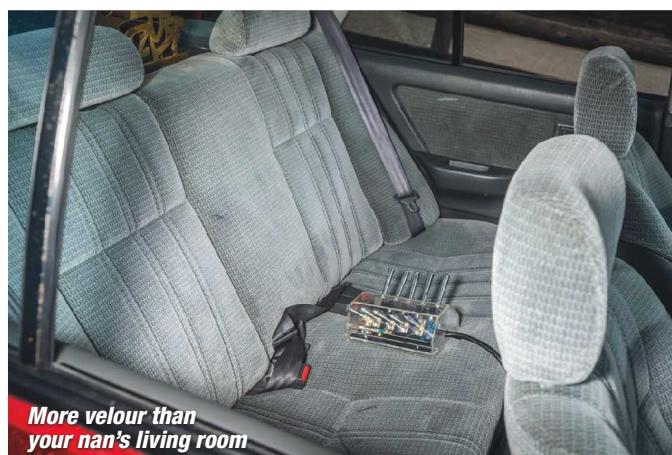
Civic! "In simple terms, you fill the boot with pumps, valves, batteries, solenoids and accumulators to replace the now-missing shocks and coils," Pete explains, "then you hose and wire it all up with some switches, and boom – you've turned your reliable grocery-getter into something that baffles your grandma and puts smiles on kids' faces everywhere!"

To augment the trad lowrider style, he was keen to run wire wheels too, and with the reverse-laced 7x13s sitting pretty under the chrome arches, it was time to think seriously about paint.

Pete spent endless hours trawling through images of 1990s customs to figure out the look he wanted, and he worked with long-time club member and paint guru Ali Butler at Vision Autoworks to lay out something truly eye-popping. Ali was given the car, a budget, and a few months, with the ultimate deadline being the 2018 Retro Rides Weekender. "I wanted to build something that would crossover between styles, showing the UK that you don't necessarily have to invest tens of thousands into a project to get noticed – and hopefully encourage people from inside and outside the scene to have a go at something similar," says Pete. "Giving someone artistic license can be a dangerous game, but Ali is a proper lowrider obsessive; we'd agreed on lots of colours broken up in lots of lines, backed by flake and finished with candy, and that's what rolled out of his workshop – Sol and I couldn't have been happier!"

The finish of the paint really is awesome – it's what first drew us toward the car, the level of intricate detail is just mind-blowing... and then Sol started flipping the switches and bouncing the car up and down, and we were hooked! Perhaps the idea of a retro candy-painted Civic on hydros doesn't work on paper, but seeing it up close shows you just how important it is to kick out of your comfort zone. This Honda is nothing short of incredible.

"No build's ever finished, there's always more to do," Pete





HOT RIDE: HONDA CIVIC



ponders, "but for now the car is being used and abused by the coolest 10-year-old on the streets (albeit being driven by his embarrassing 35-year-old dad), going to as many shows as we can and generally just enjoying trying to break stuff so we can fix it again! The feedback we've had has been immense, of all the cars I've had and all the money I've spent, this plucky little Honda has surpassed the attention of any."

Pete and Sol have every intention of continuing to modify the car – and with a good seven years before Sol will be old enough to drive it to school, who knows how different it'll be by then? But one thing's for sure: he'll be the coolest kid in the car park. Let's face it, he already is. 

TECH SPEC: HONDA CIVIC

STYLING:

Custom candy and flake paint by Vision Autoworks

TUNING:

D14A1 1.4-litre twin-carb, stock running gear

CHASSIS:

7x13-inc reverse lace 'China' all-chrome wire wheels with 3-bar knock-offs, 175/50 Nankang tyres, 2 pump 4 dump Black Magic hydraulic pumps, custom-fitted and modified side-ported front and rear hydraulic cylinders, 4x Hankook MF31 1000amp batteries (wired at 24volt), 2 banks of Accumax solenoids, pre-wired 10-switch box, 4 switches in dash, 4x accumulators with manual lock-off valves, adjustable rear camber arms

INTERIOR:

Stock EF interior

THANKS:

My girlfriend Rach and her daughter Liv, Sol's mum Kate, all the support from grandparents, all the hard work put in by Matt and Bains and my Tru-Rydz brothers, and finally all the homies within the lowrider scene that continue to support UK lowriding



In seven years he'll be able to drive it



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HOT RIDE: MERCEDES C240 SPORT

Words Emma Woodcock Photography Dan Pullen



NOTICE ME, SENPAI!

*Loud, low and
louche, this nineties
C Class is one
badass bippu*



HOT RIDE: MERCEDES C240 SPORT

Skyscrapers punch out at the heavens; concrete stakes the scenery, weathered and angry. The morning strikes. Every pavement step, every traffic light tailback burns faster than the last: a greyscale heartbeat thumping against the city limits. Sliding along the tarmac, a lone Mercedes bristles into sight. Splitter centimetres from the ground and rolling on brash, five spoke alloys, this yakuza bruiser makes itself seen.

The scene could be straight from an anime: one where dangerous men and big-eyed women are back dropped by gangland Tokyo, learning to fight or to feel in twenty minute instalments. It isn't. Instead, it's just another day in the industrial Midlands and Matthew Harte is on the way to work in his 1998 Mercedes-Benz C240 Sport. It might be a small saloon but it's big on VIP style.

As any devoted otaku or wannabe weeaboo knows, VIP Style – or bippu – is big in the Japanese custom community. Some think it developed from mafioso rides, others that it stemmed from the local street racing scene but the reality is no-one can quite be sure. Regardless, the look's purpose is well understood: VIP is a way to stand out without attracting the wrong kind

of attention. This scene is all about big saloons, bigger wheels, slammed chassis and limo-spec interiors. Bosozuku it ain't.

You'd struggle to tell today but Matt never intended to go this far. Back in July 2016, his freshly purchased W202 was acting as the practical counterpart to his Golf GTi project car and had yet to see a single tweak. Over the next two months, that would begin to change. First the Merc gained orange front indicators, then LED number plate lights, chrome bumper trims, spring pads, a genuine AMG boot spoiler and a set of replica AMG Aerostar alloys. The mods were minor, but they hinted that this build could get big.

Fate forced the next change, when the bolts holding the backbox in place went from lenient to all-out loose. Within the course of a single morning's commute, the exhaust jutted backwards and burnt a hole through the rear bumper. Ouch.

A replacement was required and leaving it standard would have been a wasted opportunity. Matt shared the situation with his father Stuart, a pro mechanic, and the pair settled on a custom, straight-through system with the backbox deleted. Made from 2.5-inch diameter stainless steel and fed through the original twin rhomboid tips, it brings the noise without disrupting the

car's aristocratic appearance.

A month later, subtlety took a seat. Using a combination of Airtisan UK and Air Ride UK parts, Matt broke out the spanners and made sure it stayed sat. "I'd been looking at coilovers," he explains, "but they're not an off-the-shelf solution for a W202 and require a lot of work. When Air Ride UK suggested bags, I just couldn't turn them down: you don't see many C Classes on air and I thought it would look kind of cool!" We're not arguing.

As the shutters went down on 2016, Matt had one debonair daily on his hands. You might even be thinking that this sweet street machine could be considered complete...

Don't be so foolish, baka! Matt needed more and, mere minutes into the new year,



Brabus rims are sweet

OEM pipes link to a straight through system



**"I felt it could – and should –
go a little lower"**



MATT HARTLE

Dream Drive?

Classic muscle, something like a Mustang or Charger. But it's an expensive hobby over here...

V.I.P. - W.H.Y.?

I like the little touches, it's like a home from home!

What have you learnt?

Nothing ever goes as planned... you aim to spend a year on it, yet you never finish the car. That's the same as any project.

HOT RIDE: MERCEDES C240 SPORT



Like a gentleman's sitting room

he went out to get it. A revised boot build was top of the list. After fitting the air system, you see, Matt had boxed the lines and controllers into a carpeted MDF cabinet which did the job but didn't draw the eye. Keen to double down on the VIP theme for not much green, he constructed a new false floor from laminate and copper piping, leaving a pair of cut outs for the air canister and controller.

Attention then turned to the interior, Matt taking inspiration from Jack Oliver Smith's Roll Hard Lexus GS300 VIP project. "I was winging it a bit really," Matt laughs, "and developed the cabin bit by bit." AMG

carbon fibre badging and AMG pedals provide a bit of upscale class, while a genuine Mercedes mobile phone holder and Nokia 3310 make clear that this project is running in the nineties. "I saw it on eBay, thought 'that'll look well good in my car' and just had to have it!" he smiles.

Online expeditions also led Matt to a selection of big ticket exterior mods: a set of genuine, 18-inch Brabus Monoblock alloys; a US market W202 bootlid; a chrome radiator grille; and an AMG front splitter. Well... the letters A, M and G are embossed into it, at least. "It came from Germany and it's fibreglass but I honestly don't know if it's

genuine," Matt explains, "it does get a lot of attention though." A full respray in Obsidian Black followed, but Matt still wasn't happy.

"I just didn't like how it was sitting," he explains, "I felt it could – and should – go a little lower." A set of TA Technic custom struts, complete with hollow centres, would provide the answer: dropping the whole car by an extra 20mm and letting the splitter scrape the floor. It's a mixed blessing; tarmac touchdowns destroyed the front lip twice last year and the area has been repainted five times to date. Matt isn't too concerned, though. He's in love with the jutting jawline and, after adding 10mm MTec front and 20mm Bimecc rear spacers, declared the exterior finished.

Slammed and rammed with rim, the Merc now embodied VIP Style almost entirely but almost isn't enough for Matt: it had to be perfect. With the 2018 show season fast approaching, the car was booked into Airtisan and a new boot build installed. "I had to create a balance," Ryan Castleman, owner of Airtisan explains, "Matt wanted practicality and usability while keeping a show worthy boot build." Key features include polished aluminium hardlines, a stained beechwood floor and a custom Mercedes logo set into a floor-mounted glass plate. "That was the hardest part," Ryan continues, "we actually had a designer create it virtually, then it was sent off and etched. It's sandwich mounted and it's a very tight fit!"

As a final touch, Matt transformed the interior into a class-leading cosplay. Like any VIP build, it's all in the details. See the

Now that's VIP style, right there





BIGGER FAMILY, BIGGER CAR

Twenty two months after the build began, the sun is setting on Matt's W202 story. With a baby on the way, the C240 is up for sale and the Hartle household has switched to a 2006 W211 E Class. 'I wanted something that was modern but still a bit like VIP Style,' he explains, 'I couldn't turn it down for the money... I just want something I can get in and drive.' That doesn't mean the new arrival will be staying standard, though. It's already received a Stage 1 remap, tints, a straight-through exhaust, a Maxton Design front splitter and sideskirts and a set of 19-inch Rotiform IND-T rims.



HOT RIDE: MERCEDES C240 SPORT



steering wheel? That's the optional item from a W210 generation E Class, complete with genuine carbon fibre. Spotted the window curtains? They're a bippu essential, mounted on custom runners. How about the quilted leather seats? They were created by Car Covers Direct, using the original Mercedes skins as a guide.

Last but not least, the drinks tables come directly from the Roll Hard Lexus that inspired Matt's build, adding some subtle scene cred. Drop in a couple of kin tsuna – they're the ropes hanging from the rear mirror – and you've got a cabin that's classy, sassy and distinctively Japanese.

Out on the show scene, Matt's hard work has been paying off. The C240 was invited inside the Fitment Junkies hall at Modified Nationals this year, it's twice taken home silverware from Elsecar at the Races and the public adore it.

"It goes down well, yeah. Kids love it, then their parents love it when they notice the cigars and the champagne! It's a different style, that's what I really like about it, and it stands out compared to everything around it. Positive or negative, people always have something to say." And, at the end of the day, isn't the custom car world all about standing out? ■

TECH SPEC: C240 SPORT

STYLING

Full respray in Obsidian Black, AMG front splitter, genuine AMG boot spoiler, US market Mercedes bootlid, Mercedes chrome bumper and side trim, Mercedes chrome radiator grille, Mercedes chrome door handles, Mercedes smoked rear lights, Mercedes orange indicators and side repeaters

TUNING

Standard Mercedes C240 engine and transmission, custom 2.5-inch stainless steel, straight through exhaust system with backbox delete and OEM Mercedes twin exhaust exits

CHASSIS

AirRIDE-System.UK air bags with TA Technic Custom Struts, twin Viair 380cc compressors, Airfisan boot build with stained beechwood floor, polished aluminium hard lines, vertical glass window and floor-mounted glass window, Air Lift Easylift V1 management system, 18x8.5in front and 18x10in rear Brabus Monoblock three-piece alloys with 225/35 front and 225/40 back tyres

INTERIOR

Original Mercedes seats with custom Car Covers Direct UK double quilted grey leather upholstery, front and rear custom perspex, wood and chrome 'VIP' drinks tables sourced from Roll Hard Lexus GS300, dual kin tsuna rope charms, custom window curtains on custom rails, original Pioneer stereo with CD changer delete and custom Aux adapter, AMG pedals and carbon fibre badging, Mercedes W210 steering wheel with genuine carbon fibre rim, custom-bored centre and adapter plate, Mercedes mobile phone holder with Nokia 3310





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HOT RIDES: LAMBORGHINI HURACÁN

Words Dan Bevis Photography Lucas Croydon





Viola Storm

In the eye of the hurricane, Justin Tan's purple drop-top, Lambo is reaping the whirlwind...

HOT RIDES: LAMBORGHINI HURACÁN



Reppin' the LB gams

The 1990s were exciting times for impressionable young car fans. The supercar excess of the '80s had brought us the angular insanity of the QV and Anniversary versions of the Lamborghini Countach, as well as the Ferrari F40, ensuring that Athena's poster sales were consistently strong to starry-eyed boys and girls. But little did those kids know what was coming in the Britpop era: the McLaren F1, the Jaguar XJ220, the Ferrari F50, the Bugatti EB110, these were glory days for junior petrolheads, these monstrous machines all fighting it out for wall-space in bedrooms across the globe. And arguably the most supercar-ish of all the supercars was the outrageous Lamborghini

Diablo – excessively wide, aggressively low, hilariously impractical, and more powerful than could ever be necessary. A particular favourite among burgeoning fans was the special-edition Diablo SE30 – essentially a street-legal race car that was lighter and more powerful than the standard version, with magnesium manifolds and huge spoilers and all sorts of ostentatious lunacy. Just 150 were made, and they brought the genre one of its most stunning paint shades: Viola Purple.

Now, a lucky few who had these posters on their walls as kids get to live the dream when they grow up, and Justin Tan is one such person. "The SE30 was my childhood dream car," he smiles. And interestingly, his own back-catalogue is studded with cars that represent more than a few dreams around the Fast Car office: custom Mercedes C63 AMG, C-West Impreza WRX, Lamborghini Gallardo, Mansory Porsche Cayenne, Novitec Lamborghini Huracán coupé, all of them heavily modified... and when the Viola Purple paint shade became available through Lamborghini's Ad Personam program, Justin could immediately see the bones of a plan beginning to assemble.

What's Ad Personam, you ask? Well, it's something the company offers for people ordering a new Huracán or Aventador, allowing them to customise and personalise with an infinite range of possibilities: paint finishes, seat trim, stitching colours and patterns, embellished leathers, forged composites, it ensures a Rolls-Royce level of personalisation for customers who don't just want to drive any old Lambo.

"This car is my second Huracán, but this time I wanted the convertible," says Justin. "I saw the potential it had to become a car with real impact. So I ordered mine direct from the factory in Viola



Prepare for take off...



Purple, in tribute to the Diablo SE30 – I had to wait twelve months for it!"

Well worth the wait, of course, that goes without saying. So he had a shiny new Lambo on order, in the correct dream-weaving SE30 shade... that was the colour taken care of, but what about the road presence? The Huracán has a gorgeous little profile, but it's designed to scythe through the air with balletic elegance, while the whole point of the Diablo was that it was, frankly, massive. So wide you could never get it in a regular parking bay, so impractical that you had to half climb out and sit on the sill to reverse it. The Huracán, as bonkers as it is, is still a little too... sensible. So how to make it a bit madder, a bit wider? The answer is Liberty Walk.

"I was reluctant to cut the guards off a brand new Lamborghini," Justin admits, totally understandably. "But when I went to Liberty Walk in Japan, I was so impressed with the company's work and craftsmanship, and the culture they've created for car enthusiasts, I jumped into ordering the kit right away. The full widebody kit was supplied by Vogue Industries, who are also known as Liberty Walk Australia, which I then brought to Camerons Bodyworks in Brisbane to get it fitted and painted."

While the work was being carried out to that fresh and unsuspecting LP610-4 shell, Justin had a little bit of shopping to do in order to transform the Huracán into a more complete package. First on the list was a full valvetronic system from Fi Exhaust – because while that 602bhp 5.2-litre V10 is a howling beast, it really benefits from open pipes to help it truly find its voice. The Fi Exhaust system is clever because it features the company's cutting-edge intelligent ECU exhaust control valve – when the butterflies are closed, you can pootle around town without going



“I’ve now started building my third Liberty Walk car”



deaf; click them open and all hell breaks loose, unlocking maximum power and maximum noise.

Another key consideration was how the car would sit. Extra width means a broader footprint is required, and the thing would look nuts at stock ride height with all this additional bodywork carried out. So to address this, Justin sourced a bespoke air-ride setup from AirREX to provide the requisite levels of hard-parked lows and everyday drivability. When the car airs out and dumps itself in the weeds, that fat purple brute looks absolutely sensational, but Justin needn’t be fearful of speedbumps either!

In terms of broadening the contact patch, it was PUR Wheels who answered the call. Their LX11 design is a forged three-piece beaut in a deep-concave setup; Justin’s opted for a 20-inch diameter here, with 9.5-inches of width up front and a mighty 12.5-inch at the rear – which is enough to fill out those colossal purple hips nicely. The rose gold finish offers a classy contrast too; it’s not a blingy, yellowy gold, but something more mellow that works with the creamy, powdery, retro Viola of the SE30.

“The last piece of the puzzle was the 1016 Industries carbon fibre bonnet,” he says. This is an aggressive piece of design, as it pinches styling cues from both the Huracán Super Trofeo road-racer and the über-unicorn Centenario, while also being lighter and stronger than the factory item.

With all of these premium pieces drawn together and expertly finished, the Huracán presents a startling and striking profile, which is mirrored in the ear-splitting shrieks when Justin fires up that Sant’Agata V10. The finish of the car is so flawless, you’d be forgiven for thinking that he’d put it together as a sort of high-net-worth showpiece, to keep in a heated garage and occasionally trailer to shows... but no, Justin’s built this to be used, and used hard. “I take it everywhere,” he assures us. “I love taking it out to meets that are thousands of kilometres away.” And that’s very reassuring, isn’t it? It’s so easy to sideline cars like this as trinkets and playboy showpieces, but Justin’s keen to keep at front-of-mind that this is, first and foremost, a car. One that deserves to be used at any given opportunity.

He has plans, of course. People with this sort of vision always do. “I’ve now started building my third Liberty Walk car,” he tells us. And given that he’s already fulfilled the SE30 boyhood dream, we can’t wait to see what the next one is... 



TECH SPEC: HURACÁN

STYLING:

Ad Personam Viola SE30 paint, Liberty Walk full carbon fibre widebody comprising wings/arches, front lip, sideskirts, rear diffuser and rear wing, 1016 Industries carbon fibre bonnet

TUNING:

5.2-litre V10, Fi Exhaust valvetronic system, 7-speed dual-clutch transmission

CHASSIS:

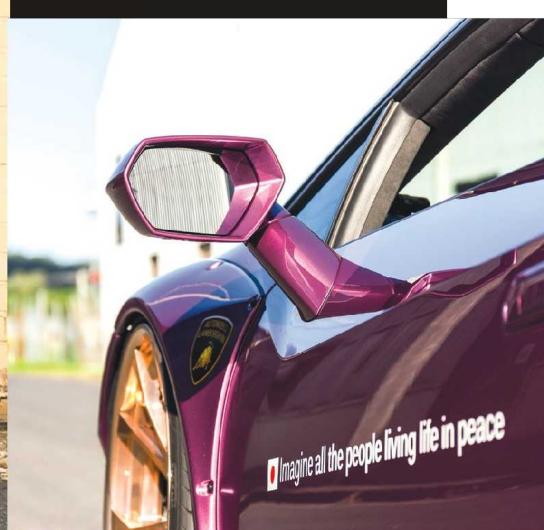
9.5x20-inch (front) and 12.5x20-inch (rear) PUR Wheels LX11 forged three-piece wheels in rose gold, 245/30 (f) and 305/30 (r) Pirelli P-Zero tyres, AirREX air suspension, 6-pot carbon brakes

INTERIOR:

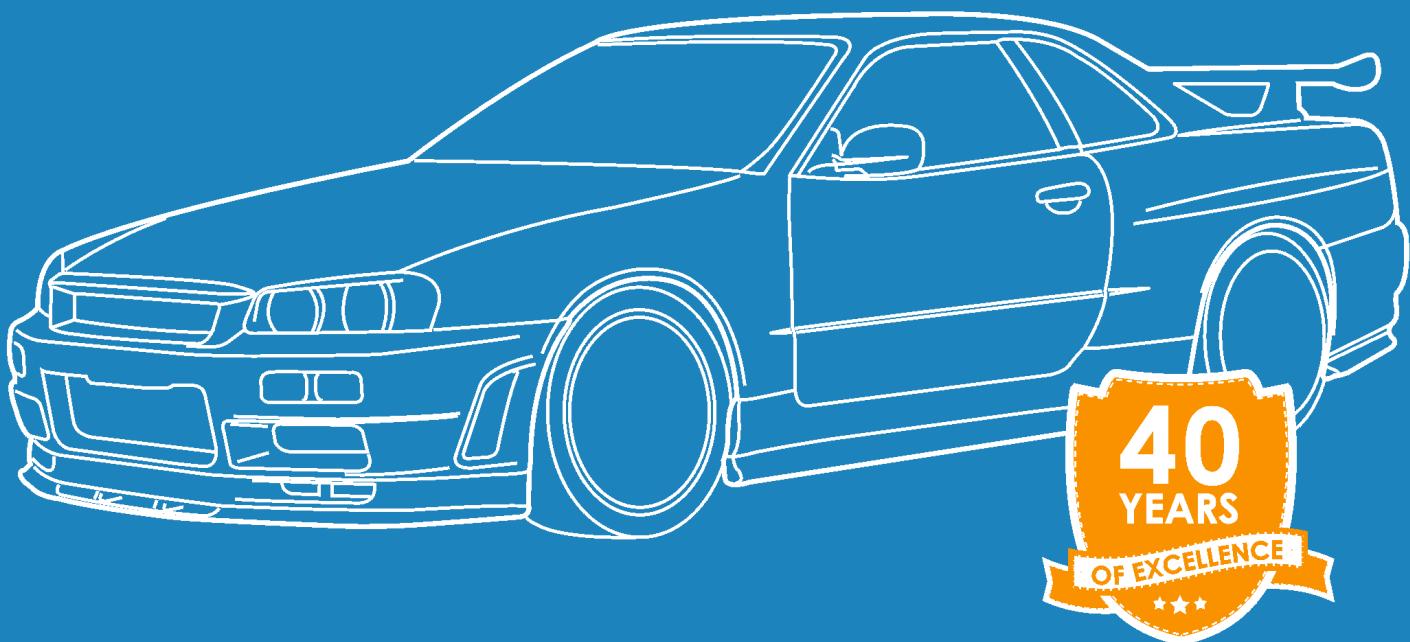
Ad Personam carbon bucket seats

THANKS:

Kato and Toshi from Liberty Walk, Camerons Bodyworks for working on the car, Alan from Fi Exhaust, AirREX, PUR Wheels, Peter from 1016 industries, Nick from Pomponazzi Crystal coating, Trakpro for the GPS Tracking, and all the staff of Vogue Industries for the whole build of the car - and last but not least is my family support for all my time spent on cars.



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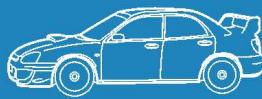
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FAST Projects



WIN ME FREE FIDDY

By this time next month the 350Z will have a new owner. Better get it finished then...

Start

P088



Never Finished

MAIN MODS: EBC BRAKES AND LOTS OF PLANS • RED LINE LUBRICANTS • PB COILOVERS • JAPSPEED EXHAUST



ZERO EV TESLA-POWERED R32 DRIFTER

It's been a Monster month for Zero EV's Skyline, in more ways than one...

Start

P090



Never Finished

MAIN MODS: TESLA ELECTRIC MOTOR • PB COILOVERS • JAFFA CAKES • 19-INCH WHEELS



SLIM JULES' BMW E91

Deeply dippy bout the curves you've got, deeply hot, hot for the curves you've got...

Start

P092



Never Finished

MAIN MODS: GIVE THE CHUBBY FELLA A CHANCE



MIDGE'S BEETLE 1.8T

Apparently it's what's on the inside that counts. Good news for the Beetle this month then...

Start

P094



Never Finished

MAIN MODS: K&N INDUCTION KIT • CORBEAU RECLINERS • SMOOTHED FRONT BUMPER • AIR LIFT SUSPENSION



MIDGE'S AUDI TT

It's a wrap for the TT...

Start

P096



Never Finished

MAIN MODS: 3M WRAP • VOSSEN WHEELS • AIR LIFT SUSPENSION • TUNED ENGINE • ICE INSTALL



#FC PROJECT FREE FIDDY

TRAX IS SO CLOSE, WE CAN ALMOST SMELL IT!



Yep, there's a distinct whiff of TRAX on the horizon, and that means that I need to stop messing about using this hairy-chested Japanese muscle car in a desperate bid to impress the local ladies... er, I mean, 'thoroughly testing the new Japspeed exhaust and PB coilovers'. Instead I need to pull my finger out and get this car up to scratch for its new owner.

Now, as we spent so much time and cash finding a high-spec UK model in black, we've always intended to keep the theme a little stealthy. Lairy graphics and wraps are all very well, but not everyone enjoys the prospect of blasting around town in a drift car, or looking like some sort of extra from the Fast and Furious franchise. So, with this in mind, we've decided that stealth is THE look for this project and we're going to achieve it with a few simple body enhancements, a few other satin black details, and some window tinting. Simple enough, eh?

First up – some subtle skirtage from the guys at Tarmac Sportz. These high-quality FRP items are rather tasteful but, most importantly, an absolute monkey like me can

get them on without any messing about. In fact, they screw into the OEM side skirts so there's no adapting and filling needed to make them fit properly. They're also supplied ready-primed, so all I needed was a few coats of satin black, and they were ready to go.

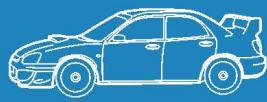
While I was painting those, I thought I'd pull out the door handles and badges to give those a lick too. Perfect to get somewhere near the 'murdered out' look... as we used to call it back in the day (damn you're old – Jules).

With all that sorted, I tapped up an old mate of mine, James at Phantom Tinting. Now, I've known James for a good few years and, as he's not far from my Chop Shop, I've seen about a billion amazing cars go in and out of there in that time. James also owns a remapping company called Phantom Tuning, and he's done a great job of squeezing a load of extra grunt out of my Navara workhorse recently, too. I was most tempted to get an expert port map while I was there, but we just don't know who's going to win it yet. To be fair I've been told I will be sacked if I follow my usual route of

getting all over excited about engine mods and taking things too far. On the bright side, though, James is an absolute demon window tinter and had the job done on the 350Z in no time at all. In fact, he didn't even punch me in the face when I turned up with the car covered in filth... which is rather nice of him.

Anyway, as you can see, the tints are spot on and James also suggested using a legal tint on the headlights to freshen them up. With the plastic headlights getting on a bit now, this was a great (and relatively cheap) way to transform the front end.

Admittedly, I wouldn't have the patience for any of this myself. The only 'wrapping' I'll be doing is on my new CD 'Midge and the Gang' which will be available on iTunes in time for Christmas (don't worry, he's joking, I think – Jules). But that's the real difference between getting a pro on it, and buying cheap online film just to explode in a fit of rage while you're trying to install it. Been there, done that, and I'd probably have a heart attack if I even attempted it! Window tinting and wrapping should be left to the pros, period.



Midge lent James his hair dryer



New skirts prepped for paint



Finishes of the sides a treat



Now it's the headlights turn for the tinting treatment



While James sorted the tints, Midge sorted the interior plastics



THIS MONTH

Parts

Tinting.....	£130
Headlights.....	£70
Sideskirts.....	£250

Total £450

CONTACTS

Phantom Tinting – 01322 836680

[www.phantomtinting.co.uk](http://phantomtinting.co.uk)

Phantom Tuning – 01322 772526

[www.phantomtuning.co.uk](http://phantomtuning.co.uk)

Tarmac Sportz – [www.tarmacsportz.co.uk](http://tarmacsportz.co.uk)





ZERO EV R32 SKYLINE

AN INFORMAL SHAKEDOWN LEADS TO A MONSTER PROPOSAL...



As mentioned last month, we decided to dive into the deep end and agree to shakedown the Tesla-powered R32, that we have now dubbed the ER32, at Fueltopia's Formula G weekend. But before the fun could start, we had a lot to get buttoned up.

First we cracked on with getting the dash all wired in, including the Feelworld 4k digital display. It will be the new focal point of the interior with all the vital information being relayed via the 4k screen.

During the build process, we have solely concentrated on the mechanics and fabrication of getting the car working, and haven't given a second thought to the aesthetics of the car, but as the Formula G is a public event we thought it would be a good idea to get the car, at the very least, presentable. We tidied up the matt black hue and then had some fresh stickers cut, including the all-important GT Tesla sticker,

and, of course, some Zero EV livery too!

The guys at Fueltopia made sure we had a charging point at the Formula G event. Well, you can't just take a jerrycan of electricity with you and it'd be a very short weekend without one. After unloading the ER32, we got to work with the shakedown. We knew we wouldn't qualify for the main event, but this was all about finding and fixing all the problems you can't foresee in the garage.

It wasn't too long until we found the first problem: the hydraulic handbrake was playing up. The solution was to use the Tesla's regenerative braking system to see if we could programme it to lock the wheels when jumping off the fast pedal. And it only bloody worked, and better than expected too. The magic setting was 70-percent in 20ms (milliseconds).

The next glitch wasn't too far away either,

as the car kept tripping-out off the start line (this is the equivalent of a combustion engine stalling/cutting out) due to a large current spike. The spike would then activate the safety trip in the computer that in turn cuts the power. The savour was again the regenerative system – we fitted a regen activation button to pre-charge the inverter, and this acted as a type of launch control system that bypassed the safety trip.

Unfortunately all of these tweaks took up the majority of the weekend but that's exactly what shakedowns are all about. Whilst we were there, Luke Woodham, professional drifter and Monster Energy driver, took an interest in the car and actually took it out for a test spin. He was so impressed by the instant power and potential of the car that he has even asked if he can use it in a future event! This build is about to get even more interesting.



SPENT THIS MONTH

Parts

Stickers	£120
Tyres	£80
Display	£scary amount

TOTAL £200+

CONTACTS

Zero EV

www.zero-ev.co.uk
@zeroevuk
07557799006



The parts are cleaned and degreased to remove any dirt and silicone residue that may be present.



Kent Custom Dipping flat the parts with wet and dry paper to ensure the parts are smooth. Imperfections are highlighted as areas of black (from the guide coat). All the imperfections found are filled with a special putty filler (right picture).



Guide Coating: We spray on a light coat of black. This allows us to find any imperfections and also to ensure we have keyed up the whole part.



JULES' BMW E91 325i

I'M DEEPLY DIPPY 'BOUT THE WAY YOU ~~WALK~~ LOOK...



The majority of you won't have a clue that these words are the lyrics of Right Said Fred's 1992 hit Deeply Dippy. Unfortunately, for the team, we haven't been able to leave this song where it belongs – in the past! Why? Because not only is our Midge a dead ringer for the lead singer but it's also one of his favourite songs, so it often gets played in the office. Anyway, what the hell has Right Said Fred got to do with my BMW E91? Well, as you know from last month, I sent all the dull, grey interior trim off to Kent Custom Dipping for a much-needed new look. And my god, have the lads delivered.

There are lots of preconceptions about hydro-dipping, the main one being that it's a quick and an easy process. This couldn't be further from the truth. The process is more complicated and time consuming than painting a product to a high standard. You have all the same preparation and painting requirements but with the dipping process thrown in for good measure – take a look at the process pictures above. But it's worth it; you get a factory spec look and showroom finish especially if you use a reputable company like the boys down at Kent Custom Dipping.

I haven't actually had the time to refit all the parts yet, but when I do, I'll be using white gloves. The products are starting to pile up now – the steering wheel is back from Edge Automotive too, so that needs fitting, along with a new set of mats that are being custom made. Basically, the interior is going to be one lovely place to sit in by this time next month.

And I've got good news on the wheel and suspension front too, a set of BC coilovers have been ordered and I'm awaiting stock of a set of rims from the US of A. It's all kicking off, so I had better get off my fat arse...



The parts are hung up to paint. This allows Kent Custom Dipping to paint all the way around the parts ensuring the best coverage.



Three to four coats of a solvent basecoat is used. This many coats are needed for the dipping process...



The pattern is laid on the water. There are several methods of doing this, KCD are demonstrating just one. The aim is to ensure there are no air bubbles trapped under the film. The pattern is Gravure Printed ink on a PVA film. Laying the film on the heated water allows the PVA to hydrate and begin to dissolve. The pattern is held in place by the dams. Once the PVA is dissolved, there is liquid PVA underneath with the solid ink floating on the surface.

Parts are masked and ready for dipping. This is done for several reasons: masking the holes helps to keep linear patterns straight and the tape around the edge ensures the pattern breaks on the tape and not the part. It also helps control where the water goes. If water touches the paint before the ink of the pattern will not stick to the paint.



This is where the magic happens – the dipping stage! The most technically challenging part of the process as individual parts require different dipping angles.



Rinsing off excess PVA. As you can see, there are white bubbles on the part. This is the excess PVA being dissolved and washed off.

A special chemical activator is sprayed on the film. This turns the ink from a solid state back to a liquid state. The film goes glass-like, this is because of the film's new liquid state.



A light tint is applied to help give the carbon pattern more depth and a more realistic look.



Finally Kent Custom Dipping apply a 2k high gloss protective clear coat.

THIS MONTH

Parts

Hydro-dipping £350

Total £350

CONTACTS

www.kentcustomdipping.co.uk



MIDGE'S BEETLE TURBO

FINGER PULLED OUT (FINALLY)...



Okay, so I've been a little lax on the Bug of late, but I assure you that my mind's been working overtime trying to figure out how I'm going to get this car sorted (along with my TT) in time to hit the FC stand at TRAX. As I write this, it's just a couple of weeks away but I'm doing my best to get organised. If there's one thing I just can't stand, it's missing my own deadlines (well, that's a porky if ever I've heard one – Jules).

Still, this month I got the kick up the arris I needed when a load of huge boxes turned up at my workshop. I'm very pleased to say my seats are here, and it feels like Christmas, my birthday and losing my virginity all rolled into one. I can't remember being this excited since, well, ever. In fact, I've been rather uncharacteristically cheerful ever since I had to lump the bastards through the door. I even took the cardboard

to the local recycling centre and everything, I'm that happy.

Anyway, I have to say that Cobra have done an amazing job with these – everything from the colour to the stitch pattern is exactly what I was after. I just couldn't have asked for more; they've gone well above and beyond with the Misano front recliners, the matching trim on the rears and the door card inserts. Of course, I've had a little lookie, but I'm resisting the temptation to get everything unwrapped until I can get them installed. You'll get to see them fully as soon as I do, or at TRAX, maybe.

But, apart from painting the shitty grey doordrags black, there's not a whole load more I can do just yet because I kind of need the actual car here for that.

You see, as my TT wrap is all done, I thought I'd drop the Bug off to Revamp

Autoworks to get it prepped with a few subtle mods ready for the rusty paint job I've been saying I'm just about to start for the past 6-months or so. I've no doubt the boys are immensely chuffed to see yet another job rock up from me... turn the page and you'll see why!

THIS MONTH

Parts

Cobra seats and trim £1950

Total £1950

CONTACTS

Cobra Seats

www.cobraseats.com

Revamp Autoworks

www.revamp-autoworks.co.uk



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MIDGE'S TT 225

IT'S A WRAP... AND NO, THAT GAG NEVER GETS OLD!



You may remember that last month I dropped my TT off to Revamp Autoworks in Orpington for a spot of refreshing on my 5-year-old wrap. They were kind enough to fit my little Audi in between other jobs and Ben, their wrapping maestro, soon discovered he'd have his work cut out with both front wings, sills, the tailgate and the passenger side rear quarter to sort out. It's nothing he couldn't handle, though. In fact, he had it all done and dusted in record time, even if I had failed to mention that a bit of fettling may be required underneath when the old one came off.

I have to admit that nothing amazes me more than the patience required for wrapping. God knows I love messing with motors but this is one of the times when it's best to get a pro on it. For amateur spanner swingers, not to mention angry short blokes, it's a blood pressure explosion just waiting to happen. The other time, of course, is window tinting. I'm not sure if we're allowed so many 4-letter words in FC nowadays so, excuse my Francais, but fuuuuuck that!

Anyway, with the wrapping ticked off the list, I rewarded the Revamp boys by dropping off my Beetle the very same day. They were most pleased to say the least! That's not the end of the hassle I've given them this month either: they have also copped the job of fitting the tyres on the Vossen wheels I've had sitting around for months, too.

As I mentioned in the last issue, Revamp are something of a one stop shop with facilities for paint and bodywork, detailing, and all manner of other stuff. Luckily for me that includes tyres. And, as I wouldn't let just anyone try to squeeze those huge Avon rubber bands onto my forged wheels, I'm glad that I've finally found someone I trust around these parts.

Quite obviously, when that was done, I couldn't wait to get them back to the workshop and try them on the car. If anything, this was to check that my offset calculations were correct. Basically, if these wheels didn't fit, I'd be a fair few quid in the hole for nothing. There was a good amount

of arse-clenching going on when I first aired out the suspension, I can tell you! But I should have had faith in my ruler – the wheels fit perfectly, with no spacers and no messing about. I needn't have worried about running bigger wheels than my usual 18-inchers either.

After I sort out a chassis notch on the front and do a bit of inner-arch fettling, I reckon it's not gonna get any better than that! Feeling smug.

There was one other thing to look at this time around too. It's always been the plan to have the TT and Beetle interiors match, but I couldn't order the TT seats until I knew that they would fit in around the roll cage. The good news is that the boys at Cobra were happy to send me a seat shell to try out first, and that arrived with my Beetle seats. As you can see, it all bolts in with a just couple of centimetres to spare. While I was there, I even tried one of the Beetle seats, just to gauge the colour. I like it lots, so an order has been placed... and I'm off to apply for a new credit card.



*Those huge
rubber
bands have
been
successfully
squeezed
on*



*A perfect fit...
now to order
the real McCoy*



*All wrapped up
and ready to go*

SPENT THIS MONTH

Parts
Wrapping £400

TOTAL £400

CONTACTS

Revamp Autoworks
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THIRD TIME'S A CHARM

Pioneer UK's commitment to modified demo motors seemingly knows no bounds, and the audio experts are back once again, this time with an all new BRZ that's stuffed with cutting edge sound-making kit





There's a well-known saying in the music industry concerning an artist's releases, namely that the third offering will invariably be a trickier thing to pull off to any successful degree than the first and second, or to give it its correct title, 'difficult third album syndrome.' The thinking behind it being that, despite their best efforts and intentions, bands, singers and artists have generally run out of inspiration or talent, or just plain can't stand the sight of one another by the time it comes to record a third album.

Why are we commencing a car feature in a specialist car magazine by banging on about the music industry? Well, partly as the maker of the Subaru BRZ you see here is none other than Pioneer UK, a company with more than a little first-hand experience when it comes to music, and partly as it's actually the firm's third take on the affordable sports car we've all come to know and love this past half-a-decade or so.

"We've come to appreciate everything about the BRZ these last few years," explains Toby Norton of Pioneer. "Partly it's down to the fact that it's such a multi-talented little car, perfectly at home on a grindingly dull Monday morning commute, but also able to put a smile on your face on the way back from even the most challenging of days."

The firm's last BRZ-shaped undertaking was far from a shrinking violet, you might remember. It sported a retro-looking livery, one directly inspired by the Pioneer-sponsored Datsuns of Paul Newman in the mid '70s, and could call upon a veritable arsenal of boot-based audio hardware. The bar was already set pretty high then, which presented Toby and the rest of the Pioneer crew something of a challenge when it came to topping it.

"From the onset we were adamant that we wanted the third BRZ to look completely different from the previous iterations. That's nothing against the older cars of course, rather we realised that the retro livery had had its moment in the sun and that it was time to try something totally new."

Pioneer's quest to differentiate its latest automotive undertaking has no doubt been aided by Subaru itself, the firm having clubbed together with Toyota once more to give the BRZ something of a mid-life refresh. The automotive world has been generally positive in its reaction to the tweaks, with the front end perhaps the biggest beneficiary. It's very much a less is more affair, with the subtle nip 'n' tuck having served to make the BRZ's nose a far better proportioned beast.

Said changes have been rendered that bit more effective by Pioneer's own efforts, the audio gurus having gone to great lengths to

polish the handling poise of this, an already highly capable car in this regard.

"We'd already altered the suspension on the old car so obviously couldn't go back to stock, it would've just been too much of a backwards step," explains Toby. "We've instead opted for a subtly overhauled aftermarket spring and damper arrangement, one which has brought about notable improvements overall."

Said suspension actually comes from ST, an arm of KW – makers of some of the most impressively capable coilovers money can buy. The ST kit in question is one of the firm's XTA packages, meaning Pioneer now



“We've come to appreciate
everything about the BRZ...”

Audio Designed and Installed by Huets - The In-Car Specialists





has full scope for accurate control of ride height, damping rate and, perhaps most impressively of all, adjustable top-mounts. It also means that finessing the cornering ability of the BRZ has become that much simpler, not least as Pioneer has had plenty of experience from its previous cars.

Those of you with longer memories might well recall that Pioneer's last project also sported a set of Rota Grids, in fact the very same set of 18in Rota Grids, but then it's hard to argue that they don't both suit the car and fill its arches very well indeed. It's a classic case of 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it.'

One of the most obvious changes, certainly when you jump behind the wheel, concerns the BRZ's OEM audio suite. With the best will in the world, the previous gen car's standard audio assortment left much to be desired, certainly as far as its integration and ability to work with smart devices is concerned. The 'Toybaru' top brass evidently listened to public opinion and noted the direction the wind was blowing, and the result is a far more advanced audio suite 'right out of the box.' This can be seen in the new car's complete audio integration functionality, with a battery of wheel-mounted buttons allowing for easy adjustment of audio parameters, and all without moving your hands from the wheel.

It probably won't be all that surprising to learn that Pioneer hasn't left well alone when it comes to its BRZ's audio capability, the new car benefiting from the newly overhauled Pioneer range. The car's new headunit, the 'mecha-free' SPH-DA230DAB to give it its full title, is a good example of this, and also of Pioneer's unwillingness to

stand still when it comes to audio R&D. Based around a firm commitment to connectivity, the SPH-DA230DAB can seamlessly sync with an array of different apps and smartphones, including both Apple CarPlay and Android Auto. This enables both Apple and Android devotees (and let's face it, the rivalry between the two camps can sometimes feel deeply tribal) to have their cake and eat it, making utilising the unit's suite of features both simple and straightforward.

There's more; the SPH-DA230DAB can also integrate with a host of third party applications, with Waze being perhaps the most significant. A handy third-party navigational app based around a vibrant community, the inclusion of Waze effectively allows the headunit to double up as a

navigational aid.

"Actually, Waze has probably come in handy more times than we'd like to admit over the last six months or so," chuckles Toby. "We can't fault it though, it's got us out of some seriously confusing situations and hasn't let us down once."

It goes without saying that the SPH-DA230DAB can handle music from a wide variety of sources, and also that Pioneer has raided its 2017/2018 catalogue to pair it with a smattering of suitably capable speakers, amps and subs.

"Pioneer actually began life as a dedicated speaker manufacturer a full 80 years ago this year, so we thought it only right and proper that we make the speaker install something rather special," muses Toby. "We've constructed custom pods for





Custom door pods house
6x5-inch speakers

Audio Designed and Installed by Huets - The In-Car Specialists

Boot build is a work of art





both the driver and passenger doors, and these now come to a TS-D65C 6.5-inch 2-way component and a TS-Z65CH 6.5-inch 2-way component. The former puts out 270w max, the latter a hefty 330w max."

Making the most of its audio clout is something of a Pioneer speciality, which is why you'll also find a pair of boot-mounted amps, a GM-D8604 for the TS-D65C and a PRS-D800 for the TS-Z65CH. There's also a duo of GM-D8601 amps, one for each of the TS-D12D4 dual 4ohm voice coil subs, both rated at a not inconsiderable 2000w max each. Nice.

The impact this massed assortment of cutting edge hardware has on music, any kind of music we might add, is nothing short

of dramatic. Rich, deep bass is an ever-present reminder of Pioneer's mastery of the dark art of in car audio, while the array of speakers and amps bring much needed tonal clarity, not to mention the SPH-DA230DAB's myriad features and functions.

So once again we're back to our starting point, the tricky third album, one which we'd argue Pioneer has managed to pull off with aplomb. The Pioneer boys have managed to avoid making changes for changes sake (hence why the Rotas have been given a stay of execution), only adding in what's required to make this BRZ easily the most capable of the trio. Will they be back with a fourth attempt in a few years time? We wouldn't bet against it. 

ENGINE

1998cc DOHC 16V Subaru FA20 'boxer,' 86x86mm bore x stroke, 63.5mm Miltex Sport stainless steel exhaust system, x2 4.5-inch stainless steel tail pipes

CHASSIS

ST -XTA height and damping rate adjustable coilovers, OEM brake setup

WHEELS

18-inch Rota Grid in satin black, 225/40x18 Toyo Proxes Tyres

EXTERIOR

Custom Pioneer Motorsport wrap designed to ape Paul Newman Nissan race car

HEADUNIT

SPH-DA230DAB

SPEAKERS IN CUSTOM DOOR PODS

TS-D65C 6.5-inch 2way component 270w max
TS-Z65CH 6.5-inch 2way component 330w max

AMPLIFIERS

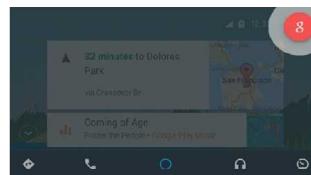
1 x GM-D8604 for TS-D65C
1 x PRS-D800 for TS-Z65CH
2 x GM-D8601. 1 per subwoofer

SUBWOOFERS

2 x TS-D12D4 dual 4ohm voice coil 2000w max each



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ANDY'S SKODA OCTAVIA vRS & DAVID'S BMW M3

FC says: They say some things run in the family, and 'building totally awesome cars' is certainly a trait that is shared by David and his son Andy, if their latest creations are anything to go by! Let's start with Andy's most recent work of art: the Skoda Octavia vRS. It might look fairly understated from the outside, but under that red shell lies a fully-forged, 400bhp motor that boasts the likes of Wiseco pistons, H-beam con rods and titanium valve springs under its lid. It's then been treated to a modern Garrett boost snail that ensures it's good for 400bhp without even breaking a sweat.

The gearbox has also been re-built and further enhanced with a Quaife LSD and billet driveshafts to ensure the whole car is up to the

job. With bronze Rota alloys setting everything off, this could quite possibly be one of the most modified Skodas around right now.

Then there's Andy's Dad's motor – an E46 BMW M3 with a tasty Martini livery adorned over its muscular flanks. But a vinyl wrap isn't the only reason it's getting a mention, as you might've gathered by now...

You see, this humble-looking 3-Series has had none other than a V10 motor from an M5 wedged into its engine bay, complete with a manual gearbox conversion from a more modern M3, to ensure it's one of the best sounding and driving cars around. It's kicking out over 600bhp. We wonder what unassuming machines this family's magic touch will transform next...

SPEC: OCTAVIA vRS

MAIN MODS

Fully built/forged engine; Garrett GT-Series turbo; Racelogic live data logging; Quaife LSD; fully built gearbox; 6-puck paddle clutch; billet driveshafts; Audi suspension arms; 6-pot calipers with 330mm discs; Rota alloys; coilovers; enlarged anti-roll bars.



SPEC: E46 BMW M3

MAIN MODS

5.0-litre V10 engine swap (from E60 M5); 6-speed manual gearbox swap (from E92 M3); AP Racing 6-pot calipers; Gaz coilovers; solid polybushes; chrome Martini-livery vinyl wrap; Rota alloys.



BYRON DEAN'S FORD FOCUS RS MK2

FC says: We never thought we'd say this about an Ultimate Green Mk2 Focus RS, but doesn't Byron's lovely example here almost look subtle with its factory-fresh exterior compared to the sticker-covered monsters we're more used to seeing in this day and age?!

Don't think for one second that this hot hatch remains fully standard, though, as Byron's spent a lot of time with his head under the bonnet pushing that engine to the point where it now offers up over 420bhp.

"I think it defines what is just about possible in a front-wheel-drive car!" he grins, walking us through the comprehensive mods that've found their way onto that iconic boosted five-banger. The most noticeable (both visually and aurally)

upgrade has to be that monstrous KMS 'Section 18' turbo-back exhaust system that features free-flowing pipework and huge 5in tips out back. There's also an Airtec intercooler and induction kit combo that ensure the five-pot engine is breathing easier than a professional scuba diver.

There are also some well thought out chassis tweaks to help put all of that power to the ground, namely Eibach lowering springs and H&R wheel spacers to give the Focus a slightly wider stance.

There's talk of a bigger turbo in the pipeline, as well as a vinyl wrap, that might finally give the game away that this ain't no standard RS... Nice work!

SPEC: FOCUS RS MK2

MAIN MODS

KMS 'Section 18' turbo-back exhaust system with 5in tips; Airtec Stage 2 intercooler with enlarged cold-side boost pipe; Airtec polished crossover with Group A induction; Forge Motorsport recirculation valve; KMS Stage 3 ECU re-map; AS plenum; 650cc fuel injectors



MATT PARKER'S PEUGEOT 207 GTI

FC says: It's not the most common hot hatch you'll see out there, but Matt's stunning red example of the 207 GTI here puts a pretty tasty argument together as to why you should always remember to consider one if you're in the market for this type of motor.

"It's a bit of a love-hate relationship!" he admits, the car springing up hurdles like a dodgy timing chain and failed coil pack within the first year of ownership. Since then, though, it's been nothing but a joy to own and modify, now sporting some pretty serious upgrades to ensure it has a lot to

shout about, even in 2018.

That boosted 1.6 motor up front benefits from plenty of Forge Motorsport goodies to ensure it's now knocking on the door of 200bhp with ease. "It's also cheaper to insure than my old 206 GTI which is a bit of a bonus!" Matt reveals – something of a win-win by the sounds of it, then!

With its 'Octane Pack' and optional bucket seats coming as standard, it really didn't take much to improve the styling, with some chunky Bola alloys and Gaz coilovers enough to make this Pug really stand out from the rest.

SPEC: PUG 207 GTI

MAIN MODS

Forge Motorsport induction kit, boost pipes, turbo hoses and recirculation valve; Spoox Motorsport carbon fibre engine cover; de-cat pipe; Gaz coilovers; Bola B10 alloys; Octane Pack styling; de-wipered tailgate; yellow tinted front fog lights



Picture courtesy of Timothy Cake

AARON ELSMORE'S VW LUPO GTI

FC says: Who said superminis don't deserve the same levels of attention-to-detail as their larger siblings when it comes to transforming them into show cars? Certainly not Aaron here, a young man whose VW Lupo has received an insane amount of work to make it one of the most epic cars we've ever clapped eyes on, regardless of its size...

"After having coilovers for the first month, a friend of mine was selling his 1/4in-line manual air ride system and I couldn't say no... that's where the addiction started," he explains. "Six months later, I ripped it all apart again and upgraded to an Air Lift Performance system with V2 management with 3/8in lines all-round, alongside the driveway-designed and built boot

build." It seems this was a project that was destined to reach epic proportions rather quickly indeed!

Now rocking a killer stance thanks to the air system, a chassis notch and plenty of camber tweaks, the car also benefits from equally-as-premium upgrades elsewhere to ensure standards were kept extremely high throughout. There's those to-die-for Gotti splits, for example, as well as plenty of custom smoothing around the bodywork to ensure the car's lines are nothing but spot-on.

But it's the interior that's really impressed us the most; rocking Mk5 Golf GTI tartan seats up front, with a custom re-trim everywhere else to match. Simply divine.



SPEC: VW LUPO GTI

MAIN MODS

Air Lift Performance air suspension system with V2 management (upgraded to 3/8 lines); twin 380C compressors; stubby 4-gallon tank; custom controller mount; chassis notch; custom home-made boot build; Gotti 3-piece split rims; rolled/ flared/cut arches all-round; custom carbon fibre rear light surrounds; smoothed front number plate recess; custom Tony Banks back-box; custom BMC CDA induction kit; Mishimoto oil catch can; gloss black roof, scuttle panel and wipers; Mk5 Golf GTI front seats on custom runners; re-trimmed factory rear seats and door cards in matching GTI tartan; half roll cage; MOMO steering wheel



LEE RUDLAND'S EUNOS ROADSTER

FC says: The Eunos Roadster (the name our Japanese cousins gave to the mighty Mazda MX-5) is undoubtedly one of the most hilarious little cars you can buy right now, regardless of how much cash you have to play with. It's something Lee here has taken full advantage of with the awesome little skid machine he's built himself, it certainly proves that sometimes, less really is more.

Lee's taken the job of ensuring his roadster is as capable as possible when it comes to drifting

pretty seriously, doing all the right mods to ensure that back end loves to step out at a moment's notice. Some lumpier cams start proceedings, with power going to a nice aggressive diff out back.

The styling's pretty awesome, too, with some super-rare Schmidt Space Line alloys working wonders against the car's quirky body lines, and a stripped interior only adding to the driver-focused vibe these cars so famously give off. If only we were allowed to take it for a little blast...

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SPEC: EUNOS

MAIN MODS

Schmidt Space Line alloys; stripped interior; Skuzzle fast-road cams; Type 2 LSD; Garage-D livery

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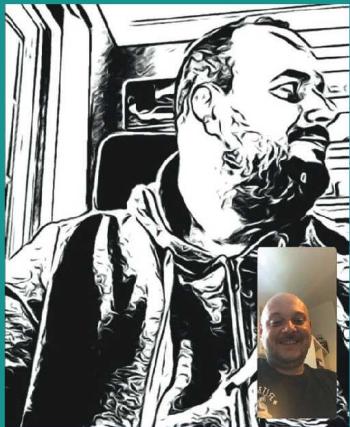
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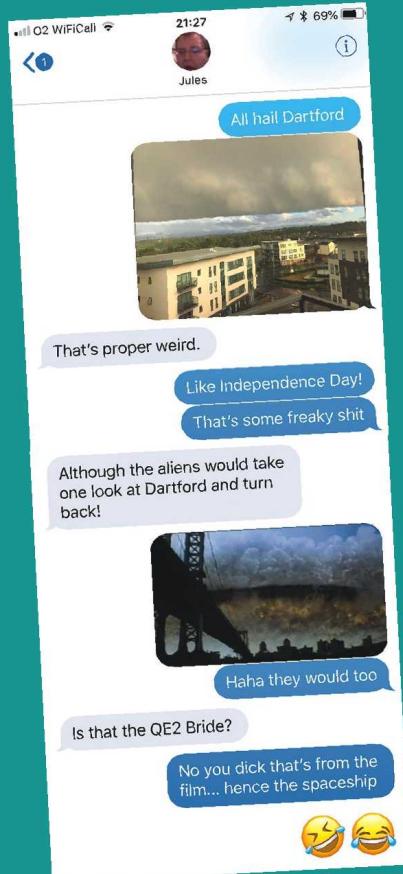
Quotes of the Month:



Jules: "Er, help, I don't know what's going on."
 Midge: "You look like you're in that '80s A-ha video."
 Jules: "You can remember the '80s?"



Midge: "Galvatron is a badass, he'd kick the shit out of Batman."
 Jules: "What about He-Man?"
 Midge: "Not He-Man, maybe Skeletor. But Jesus would do everyone else."
 Initial G: "Are you two on drugs?"



Text of the Month:
 Today will be our Independence Day... or something like that...



That's Snot Nice

They say that revenge is a dish best served cold, and it looks like they must have been talking about ice cream sundaes. Never let it be said that our Jules won't get his own back for any of the random pranks that the boys dish out. Fancy some extra nose candy with your dessert Midge?



Celebrity Status

You know what it's like, you get famous and everyone wants you to endorse their products. At least, we think that's why this new wheel cleaner has our Jules' name all over it. That said, we can't quite remember the last time that the boss actually scrubbed his own hoops... not unless the bloke in the local Sainsbury's carpark happens to be called Jules too. Still, you'll be glad to know that our illustrious Editor is also available for other endorsements including, weddings, big clothing brands and sport centre openings.

Oops

In his epic quest of trying to get paid by every car magazine ever, just for spouting incomprehensible shite, our Midge attended a Mini show recently. What he didn't tell us though, was that he properly messed up the 'mini bake off' competition by making one of the cakes a convertible before the bloody judging even took place. For once he can't do his usual Shaggy impression and say "It wasn't me" either, we have the evidence... (er, sorry, love - Midge).

TOP 5 VIDEOS

RETRO RIDES GATHERING
 Check out all these old-skool monsters running up the legendary hill at Shelsley Walsh. Epic stuff!
<https://www.fastcar.co.uk/videos/retro-rides-gathering-2018-official-video/>

MINTY SUBARU WRX
 Nu-skool Scoobys just don't get any fresher than Chad's WRX here. In fact, it's so minty, it should be a bloody Polo!
<https://www.fastcar.co.uk/videos/minty-fresh-subaru-wrx/>

STANCED SCION FR-S
 We have to say we're fans of our home-grown stanced GT86s and Subaru BRZs, but we love this kind of malarkey with the Scion version in the USA too.
<https://www.fastcar.co.uk/videos/stanced-scion-frs-modified/>



Secret Santa

It's already that time of year! Can you believe we're keeping an eye out for Christmas presents already? The good news is that we've already spotted what Yuletide gem we'd like to get our G... and we mean the number plate, not the lady in the pink mac, she's way too young!



Lost 'n' Found

It's amazing what you can find on a beach. Glenda thought he'd lost his favourite green flip flop forever after a family holiday in Cornwall when he was fifteen. But no, here it is buried on the very same beach a good couple of decades later. It's just a pity his feet have grown even more since then, 'cos it'll be way too small now.



Nutritional Advice Pt5

We haven't had any diet advice from Jules for a couple of months, and strictly speaking we haven't got any now. But that doesn't mean he's back on the Krispy Kremes. He's still going strong and doing so well he fits into Midge's jumpers. Of course, that would be even more impressive if Midge wasn't such a fat bastard.



THIS IS THE CRUISE

Yes people, cruising will never die! Here's a peek at what went on in Falkirk, Scotland at This Is The Cruise 2018. Awesome effort! <https://www.fastcar.co.uk/videos/this-is-the-cruise-2018/>



WÖRTERSEE RELOADED

We don't know about you, but we just can't get enough of Wörthersee, so here's some more cool shizzle from Austria. <https://www.fastcar.co.uk/videos/wortersee-reloaded-2018/>

BLAST FROM THE PAST ISSUE 283 NOVEMBER 2009

*In this very issue
9-years and 118
issues ago...*

- This time we built the Civic cover car ourselves... with nothing but a sketch and 68-hours!
- We all remember Spot-on Jon and his super-plush VW Polo, we remember shooting it on the beach at Weston-super-Mare too. It was freezing.
- It's pretty plain to see why we love USC so much. It hasn't really changed after all these years either!
- The Bonus section was fun, we all went back to school... quite literally.
- The Lupo is one of those cars that still holds its own today. This was one of our favourite builds of 2009.
- We can't remember if this was the last time we had an epic little Yaris in FC... probably not.

- Dave's Cossie-powered, space-framed Ford Anglia got us all drooling!



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Interior Designs – It's what's on the inside that counts



Out 'n' About

Players North Weald – The original but is it still the best...?

TRAX Silverstone – We went, we concurred and we got the t-shirt.

Plus

Product tests, Posters, Fast Projects, and loads more



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-Carl Spackler



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